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NEW STATESMAN

Santiago Carrillo
Eurocommunism & Social Democracy

Peter Taylor: Conditions in the Maze Prison

Profile of François Mitterrand

James Fenton: Pobblebookle Abblesqualbs?

Ambassador College
NOV 21 1977
LIBRARY

Russell Davies: Too Many Poets

Brian Glanville: Pelé's Long Goodbye

God Bless the Squire

This week's additions to the unending Maudling saga remind us once again that politicians of his stamp consider themselves entitled to a way of life far beyond the reach of ordinary mortals. Behind the hedges of Bedwell Lodge, or in the pool kindly donated by his friend and landlord, he was able to seclude himself from the good people of Barnet who had the privilege of voting for him – and all for £100 a year, a good deal less than the rent paid by the most meanly housed council tenant in Barnet or anywhere else. Now he is to buy the house for £30,000, with the option of keeping it or of selling it for something like £150,000 – that, a local estate agent reckons, would be a fair price for the property in today's 'extraordinarily quick' market, open to those men of enterprise who, in reality as distinct from fantasy, have not all been crushed by socialist taxation or forced to emigrate. However, it would be otiose to say much more about Mr Maudling, whose involvement in bizarre business transactions is exceptional even for a Tory politician and who may safely be left to his place in the comic folklore of our times.

Much more disturbing are the indications that the Maudling way of life is regarded as normal or even enviable by important figures in the Labour Party. Sir Harold Wilson, in the days when he was proudly contrasting himself with such effete and privileged social relics as the 14th Earl of Home, claimed to incarnate the values expressed in the phrase: 'a good day's pay for a good day's work'. Once, when asked whether he considered himself to come from the working class, he replied that his father 'never had a penny that he didn't earn' – with the implication that this defined the virtuous citizen. Yet the Prime Minister who conferred a knighthood on Sir Eric Miller was not the Earl of Home, nor the yacht-owning Edward Heath, but Harold Wilson.

Long before the Fraud Squad began to take an interest in Miller's affairs, there was no excuse for not knowing what kind of a man he was. He had an astronomical number of pennies, of which he had earned very few. His contribution to the national wealth, or to the technological breakthroughs so much exalted in the Wilson years, was zero. He simply acquired people's homes and made them pay more rent, or else get out. The tenants, aided by Labour councillors, staged protest rallies. Even a Tory MP complained that Miller was 'giving a thoroughly unsavoury name to all good landlords'; and even a Tory Minister of Housing (that apostle of capitalism, Sir Keith Joseph) admitted that Peachey Properties was 'often insensitive in its relations with tenants'. This is the man who became a friend and intimate of Sir Harold Wilson, freely granted access to the private rooms in 10 Downing Street, and finally honoured for illusory 'services'. Nor by any means was he the only one.

An assumption has grown up that anyone who gets to the top in a Labour Government is entitled to live very comfortably indeed. Sir Harold now has not merely a second but a third home ('one's absurd', he would probably say, like the old fellow of Lyme who married three wives at a time). Mr Callaghan owns a farm in the lush and coveted Sussex countryside. Mr Healey has just paid £65,000 for a new house. All three have, in recent years, been foremost in enforcing wage restraint and preaching the necessity of sacrifice to the working class. Thanks to their efforts, the standard of living has been reduced in the second year of the freeze. Reduced, that is, for the vast mass of the population: not for property-owners, manipulators of the Stock Exchange, or the masters of our destinies.

The agenda for next week's Labour Party conference includes an amendment to the rules in the section dealing with candidates and MPs. It reads:

> Provided that the nominee accepts that any remuneration from any source, over and above the average wage of a skilled worker together with legitimate expenses . . . shall be donated to the Labour Party.

That breathes a spirit innocently redolent of pristine ideals. Remote indeed are the days when such ideals were taken seriously.

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Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

Cyril's Cry for Help

In many ways it must be very nice to be David Steel, to know that you are loved by your party, that you'll get a standing ovation, bags of applause and lots of laughs whenever you ask for them. The Liberal Party is extraordinarily genial. Looking round the Dome on Tuesday, I decided that I had never seen such a set of happy smiling faces. Even the Young Liberals, who felt it necessary to hiss and cry 'shame' occasionally, did so with the greatest grace. They would hiss briefly, then their faces would be wreathed in smiles. They would boo a little, then relapse into giggling inanity. Meanwhile, every time Steel raised his voice towards the end of making a point, he was guaranteed a warm response. 'Blah, blah, blah . . . reputation as purposeless incompetents.' 'Hear, hear, hear.' 'Blah, blah, blah . . . outdated confrontation attitudes of class war.' Roars of applause. 'Blah, blah, blah . . . attempting to run a late 20th-century economy on late 19th-century attitudes.' Further appreciative shouts of 'hear, hear.'

But what did it all mean? What did it add up to? All that talk about Norway and Sweden, giving the impression that something was really up, all that stuff about giving the battle against inflation the highest priority, all that marking of 'the beginning of a return to sanity in this divided country', all that 'national interest as the proper standard of political decision' – what was it all about? Steel's economic report, with its message 'now at last we are about to come out of the wood' – was it not precisely what a Labour politician would have said under the circumstances? Is it not precisely what Labour politicians will be saying in Brighton next week? What is so specifically Liberal about it?

The fact was that, although Steel was appreciatively heard, nobody was actually listening to a word he was saying. They were listening to the cadences. They were waiting for the emphases. They were enjoying the climaxes. They were not thinking about the content, largely because, in all the years they have been Liberals, they have never expected to hear a speech with any content. Content is not really what they're interested in. If they were, they wouldn't be Liberals. Steel had managed to extract from the Government a promise that they would put something about profit-sharing in the next Finance Bill. And not only that, he had gone to great lengths to get permission to announce this himself, so that no one would be in any doubt that this was a Liberal measure. The whole of his speech was constructed in such a way as to lead up to this announcement – look boys, here we are, we've actually got something. Pause. I said we've actually got something. Pause. Did you hear? It's really true, after all these years we've done something towards profit-sharing – for crying out loud, it's going to be in the next Finance Bill. Applause.

Old habits of thought die hard, and the old habit of Liberal thought is abstract hope, a hope that, like Hamlet's chameleon, eats the air, promise-crammed. Liberal thought is not used to discussions of tactics or deals. It finds it difficult to concentrate on the present day. It finds it difficult to concentrate, period. That is why Steel, in addressing the party, has the air of a teacher, but a teacher whose points are continually being missed. What was that he said, for instance, about a coalition? 'Now we have to demonstrate that if this much can be done by a tiny band of Liberals outside the Government, how much more could be done by a larger group inside the next Government . . .' Did he really say that? What does it mean?

One man who was not paying much attention to Steel's actual words was Cyril Smith. Well, he was not in the Dome at the time – he was out signing copies of his book. But he read the transcript over, and when he read it over all he saw was one word – stomach. Stomach. Of course, anyone referring to a stomach must, simply must be referring to Cyril Smith. What did he say? 'He that hath no stomach for the fight, let him depart.' Stomach . . . depart. A clear insult there. What could be clearer? Steel was saying, 'People with fat stomachs should leave the Liberal Party.' How disgraceful.

Must every Liberal Assembly turn into Cyril's cry for help? I fondly ask. Last year it was the same, Cyril sulking in his tent, surrounded by family and friends, waiting to be wooed back by his leader. The difference however between last year and this is that, having triumphed over the majority of his opposition, Steel is now rather less concerned about the Smith family's wounded feelings. Indeed, Smith may live to revise his opinion of Steel as expressed in his autobiography, *Big Cyril* (W. H. Allen £5.50), where he states:

> David, like Jeremy Thorpe, is a drawing-room politician, a smoother-down of ruffled feathers, a man who leads with gentle pressure from behind. I think he lacks the killer instinct which I believe to be necessary if the Liberal Party is ever to drag itself out of its gently minority status to become a full-blooded and effective force in this country.

I rather doubt whether Steel does lack the killer instinct. As this column was the first to point out, David is not as nice as he looks. Poor old Cyril has never got over Steel's killer instinct in the leadership campaign, when he saw a gap in John Pardoe's hair-do, and went for it like a bullet. Here by the way is what *Big Cyril* has to say about Pardoe:

> He is the sort of man I believe necessary to take the Liberals 'over the top' like a great war infantry commander. He could well lead the party into the very muzzles of the machine guns, and there would no doubt be many casualties, but I would much prefer to go down on the attack than under the remorseless attrition of static political warfare.

One wonders, with language like this, exactly what Pardoe and Smith had in mind for the Liberals. Whatever it was, it appears that nowadays Pardoe has given up his notion of going over the top, and Smith is left alone with his dream of a decimated Liberal Party hanging on the old barbed wire.

There is often a peculiar, hectic violence in Smith's speech, as in his description of Margaret Thatcher on Tuesday night. Referring to her performance in a recent economic debate he said: 'She went mad – rather like a nagging old woman who has had a drop to steady her nerves and who, as a consequence, nagged to the point where it was impossible for her to be rational or constructive, or worse still, impossible for her to shut up.' Smith should know. Shutting up is precisely what he prides himself he cannot do. But it was noticeable, as he made his appeal for an end to the Lib-Lab pact, that the vast audience was not on his side. The opposition, what there had been of it, was beginning to lose heart. This is because, one way or another, they really do not have any confidence that they know better than Steel. Nor are they willing to give up that semblance of power just at the point when they might, to their vast surprise, have begun to gain something.

What Steel wants to do in this Assembly is to convince his own party of their achievements, as a prelude to their convincing the electorate. He recognises that he has not had much success so far as convincing the electorate is concerned. But he does give the impression of faith in his own judgment. He came to Brighton in the hope of getting through the week without being burdened down by specific and unrealistic resolutions about how he should manage the pact over the next year. He wanted to be left as free as possible to run the affairs of the Parliamentary Liberal Party as he wished. In this aim, he appears so far to have succeeded, despite Cyril's cry for help, and despite the genial catcalls of the Young Liberals. What he does with the success, of course, is another matter.

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Mervyn Jones

Beside the Seaside

Only in Britain do political parties hold their conferences at seaside resorts. The atmosphere is conducive to tolerance and reconciliation ('Now then, don't snap at your brother like that, we're going to have a nice week here.') Among Labour delegates especially, memories of auld acquaintance and past happiness return with the ozone. Not much has changed in the Labour Party since I've known it, except that rival attractions have somewhat reduced its popularity. But that's also true of Brighton.

What is the Labour Party? Like several other British phenomena – the Church of England, the unwritten 'British constitution', large chunks of the common law – it is an accretion of hallowed ambiguities. Just as the Church of England is, and also is not, a Catholic church (it is defined as such in the Creed, its never-amended Clause Four) so the Labour Party is, and also is not, a socialist party.

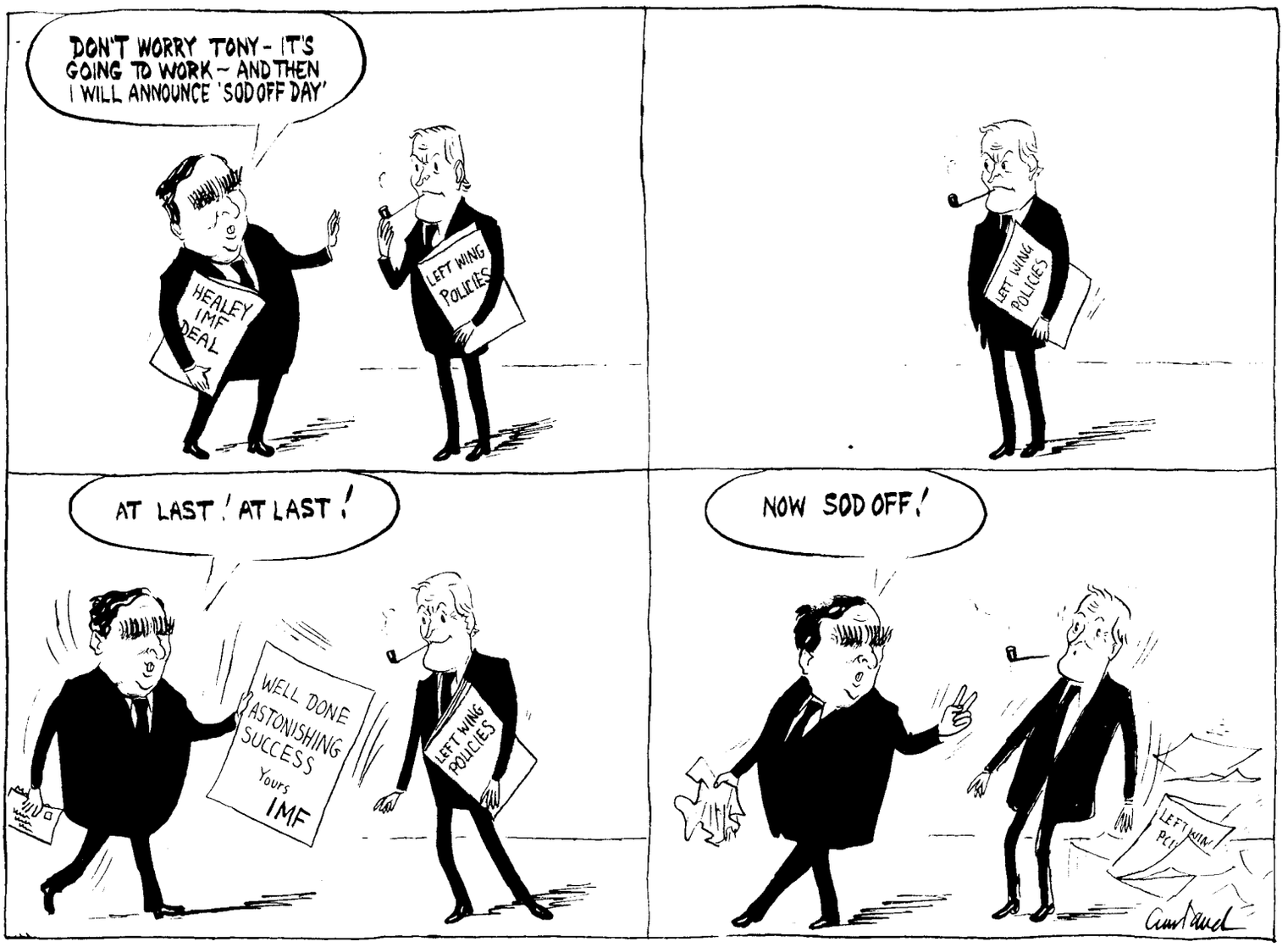
There are thousands of people up and down the country who wouldn't stay in the party if socialist aims were flatly renounced; and leaders like Wilson and Callaghan know that these people are indispensable. There are also people – of course, this is no novelty – who are leaving the party because they see it becoming too socialist. One of these is Mr Woodrow Wyatt, or is that right? The dust-jacket of his new book, *What's Left of the Labour Party*? (Sidgwick & Jackson, £4.95) tells us: 'He is still a paid-up member of the Labour Party.' In the book he tells us: 'It was right to support the Labour Party in the past. It is wrong to do so now.' He goes on to assert that what the country needs is a landslide Tory victory, two terms of Tory rule, and the 'break-up of the present Labour Party'. Can it be that Wyatt is *in* the Labour Party but doesn't support it, just like those terrible Trots? One would like to know.

It's a distinctly ungenerous book, in which all the people who have disagreed with Wyatt at various times are described as hypocritical, personally ambitious or cowardly. It is full of grumbles, welded into a conspiracy theory: taxation on high incomes, withdrawal of tax relief on second homes, abolition of pay-beds, and mixed-ability classes in schools are part of 'the steady advance towards a Marxist or Eastern European style state'. You wouldn't imagine that it was Hugh Gaitskell, Wyatt's hero, who coined the aphorism: 'Socialism is about equality.' Things are pretty bad, it seems. 'Between 1970 and 1974' (after Wyatt had ceased to be an MP) 'the Marxists' philosophy came into command of the Labour Party's thinking.' The goal of the Marxists and similar extremists, in which category Wyatt includes one-third of Labour MPs and the present majority in the National Executive, is to crush freedom and reduce the British people to an undifferentiated mass of frightened, impoverished serfs.

Well, maybe. One of the conspirators must certainly be Brian Sedgemore, a leading spirit in the *Tribune* Group. But in a pamphlet called *The How and Why of Socialism* (Spokesman Books, 95p) this is what Sedgemore has to say:

> There will always be tensions between individuals and institutions and between one institution and another; and the fact that they will sometimes express themselves in dialectical form may well be our safeguard against oligarchic, bureaucratic or authoritarian socialism – although strictly speaking these are contradictions in terms . . . Individuals should constantly question their relationship to the institutions that represent them and the relationship between one institution and another.

I suppose Wyatt would say that Sedgemore (the word 'dialectic' reveals the cloven hoof) is just being cunning. Still, this libertarian


DON'T WORRY TONY - IT'S GOING TO WORK – AND THEN I WILL ANNOUNCE 'SOD OFF DAY'
HEALEY IMF DEAL
LEFT WING POLICIES
LEFT WING POLICIES
AT LAST! AT LAST!
WELL DONE ASTONISHING SUCCESS Yours IMF
LEFT WING POLICIES
NOW SOD OFF!
LEFT WING POLICIES

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doctrine is the persistent theme of the piece of prose in which it occurs, and Sedgemore doesn't have to say such things unless he wants to. Similar declarations of faith in pluralism and the questioning spirit were made by Stafford Cripps, Aneurin Bevan and Michael Foot at the very times when they were most reviled as extremists.

Here we should recall that the Labour Party's opponents have been exposing it as a tool of the Marxists for as long as the oldest among us (even Lord Shinwell) can remember. In 1924 Ramsay MacDonald was driven from office for being soft on Bolshevism. In 1937 Clement Attlee was charged with revealing his hidden sympathies by giving the clenched-fist salute during a visit to British volunteers in Spain. In 1945, though Attlee had become respectable, Churchill based his election campaign on warning the voters that a Labour victory would deliver real power to Professor Laski and subject us to a British Gestapo.

The truth is that the left-wingers, or Socialist Leaguers or Bevanites, or whatever they have been, never have controlled the Labour Party and don't control it now. By 'control' I mean the only thing that matters: decide what a Labour Government does when in office. It's true that the steamroller majority formerly taken for granted by the Right of the party has ceased to exist since about 1956, thanks primarily to changes in the leadership of the two biggest unions. To say that these unions are at the service of the Left is, however. an oversimplification. It was most true in 1969 when they defeated Wilson over *In Place of Strife*; but they were acting in defence of their own independence rather than in pursuit of any ideological aim. From 1975 to 1977 they underwrote the wage freeze, which in Woodrow Wyatt's fantasy world appears as a Marxist plot to level rich and poor, but which in reality outraged the Left. The future course of the big unions (since the political beliefs of Moss Evans are still opaque and we don't know who will succeed Hugh Scanlon) is difficult to predict.

At present, the Left has a majority on most issues at conference and in the National Executive. It is thus enabled to carry resolutions which are ignored, to protest against social service cuts which nevertheless take effect, and to publish vast documents which nobody reads. Even Fred Mulley, the meekest of Ministers, rejects the proposals of the NEC whenever his alarm-clock rings.

Meanwhile the Government rules, OK? And this Government (lacking even a Chancellor with heretical ideas, like Hugh Dalton in 1945) pursues a rigidly orthodox economic policy designed to patch up the ailing structure of British capitalism. TUC deputations regularly complain about unemployment, everybody at Brighton next week will doubtless weep tears over unemployment, but unemployment is what we have. The Government has successfully sold the idea that reducing inflation and reducing unemployment are part of the same slow, stately process. But in real life a choice has to be made, and the Left has scarcely even perceived that unemployment is a useful deflationary mechanism, as well as being less harmful electorally than inflation. Beyond any question Mr Callaghan and Mr Healey have made their choice. If they could get Britain into the situation achieved in West Germany under Herr Schmidt's virtuously non-Marxist regime they would be delighted.

In the face of all the evidence, Healey still believes that wage increases are the sole cause of inflation and wage restraint the sole remedy. If you had an upset stomach, and were persuaded that it was due to drinking, and didn't drink for two years, and still had an upset stomach, you might cast about for fresh ideas; but not Dogmatic Denis. The extent of his inflexibility is illustrated, almost incredibly, by the case of the firm of James Mackie of Belfast. The wages, like wages generally in Northern Ireland, are low and a rise is long overdue. A wage rise in West Belfast, the Catholic zone, to somewhere near the level obtaining in the shipyards which employ only Protestants would be a positive political factor, about the only one ever contemplated by Mr Callaghan's Government. None of this is taken into account. The Government has at its disposal a battery of sanctions which were designed to be used – thus they were sold to the Labour movement and to Parliament – to compel recalcitrant companies to invest, to give priority to exports, and to sign planning agreements. There are in fact very few planning agreements (the Government having renounced the 'extremist' idea that they should be compulsory) but some firms like Mackie have modernised their plant and made export ventures. The sanctions are now to be used, not for their proper purpose, but to hold down wages. If the export orders are lost because of the withdrawal of government guarantees, the result will be unemployment or a stop to modernisation or both.

I find that I'm already writing the speech in which Callaghan or Healey would denounce this doctrinaire, ruthless, short-sighted decision if it had been made by a Tory government. But of course we have a Labour Government, subject to pressure from the Left which insists on wage increases and from the unions which protect their members' jobs. Or do we? You could have fooled me.

K. R. Sundar Rajan

Janata's 200 Days

There is a disquieting ring of half-truth in some of the statements Mrs Gandhi has been making during her tortuous come-back trail. 'The people are with me,' she told a sizable crowd in Uttar Pradesh state. 'They know that it is I who always went to the rescue of basic democratic values when dark clouds hovered over us.' In private conversation, leaders of the Janata Government admit that the emergency would have dragged on with unpredictable consequences had Mrs Gandhi not taken the electoral plunge last January. Thus, in a sense, she can claim some credit for the speedy restoration of civil liberties of which, incidentally, she is a key beneficiary, judging by the whopping publicity her daily innuendoes get in the press. Perhaps Mrs Gandhi is also partly responsible for the continuing unity within Janata, despite visible strains between some of its original constituents and unseemly squabbles. 'Please do not forget,' Jayaprakash Narayan told Janata workers, 'that Mrs Gandhi is not finished . . . She may come back if you are not united.' Six months after Janata's victory Mrs Gandhi continues to haunt India. Indeed, the national preoccupation with her has become almost obsessive. 'She is democracy's bugbear,' said one ruling party MP. 'Each time we fight among ourselves reconciliation seems to come only when we think of the return of the goblin!'

Fortunately for Janata, each time Mrs Gandhi opens her mouth she manages to bring its constituents and leaders a little closer – and also reduces her own chances of effective political survival. Prime Minister Morarji Desai, Home Minister Charan Singh and Defence Minister Jagjivan Ram – the trinity of the Janata pantheon – have been appalled by her repeated charge that 'the excesses of the new regime are far worse than the ones I am supposed to have committed'. She has been speaking of indiscriminate arrests, police surveillance of Opposition politicians, censorship of newspapers, and inspired character assassination. Even Ram, who has been a reluctant member of Janata, seems to have finally convinced himself that unless the party presents a solid front, Mrs Gandhi's falsehoods may achieve growing credibility among people, particularly in rural areas, whose gullibility – as the emergency demonstrated – is made worse by their desperate poverty. An estimated 5,000 villagers recently cheered when Mrs Gandhi told them: 'All your sufferings are due to the new Government . . . All that I did for you has been undone in just six months.'

Janata's achievements in its first 200 days are not negligible. The rule of law is now firmly established. Far from being vindictive – one has only to look at neighbouring Pakistan and Bangladesh to see the contrast – the Desai Administration is moving against the authors of emergency excesses with the utmost caution and entirely according to the often extremely cumbersome legal processes. All the half-a-dozen cronies of the former Prime Minister arrested for embezzlement of Congress Party funds have been freed on bail. The terror apparatus Mrs Gandhi built up has been dismantled. The press is now so free that many editors and journalists who found refuge in silence or sycophancy during the emergency are now attacking Janata with gusto. For the first time in India's history the government-owned radio and TV are allowing Opposition politicians generous publicity. Whatever its shortcomings in other areas, the Desai Administra-

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tion has clearly proved its faith in democracy.

But the shortcomings are glaring. Despite record grain stocks, the promise of 'two square meals a day' is still beyond the reach of more than half the population. Prices of most essential commodities have been steadily going up, though Mrs Gandhi's charge that the upward trend began with her electoral downfall is patently untrue. The price of pulses has gone up by almost 60 per cent in the last 15 months, while edible oils have come to cost 75 per cent more in the same period. The promise of a nation-wide network of fair-price Janata (people's) shops to cater to the common man's needs is yet to materialise. The unemployment situation is as dismal as before – according to one estimate, 20 million Indians are without jobs. Corruption in government offices is no less a problem than under Mrs Gandhi, though it is generally conceded that on the whole Janata politicians in ministerial office in New Delhi and the states are men of integrity.

While Desai's contention that the massive economic problems he has inherited from 30 years of Congress rule cannot be solved in just six months is very true, this argument cannot comfort the man in the street. He is impatient for results – and Mrs Gandhi is counting on this impatience. She is evidently hoping that it is only a question of time before the cruelties of the emergency are forgotten by the public even if the Janata Government is not going to forgive her. She may not be entirely mistaken in this hope. There is no doubt that the sordid revelations about the misdeeds of her son Sanjay, Bensi Lal, the former Defence Minister, and others close to her have tarnished her reputation. But experience has shown that public memory in India is even shorter than elsewhere. While attending a family wedding in the southern city of Bangalore a few days ago I was aghast to hear a Brahmin, a distinguished lawyer of the Madras High Court, declaiming: 'My train was two and a half hours late, my maidservant has become cheeky, and the beggars are back in town. At least, Indira kept everyone under control. And now Desai threatens to clamp down total prohibition!' One of the guests asked him whether he preferred two bottles of rum to civil liberties and the unhesitating answer was: 'Rum, always.'

The moral of all this is that Janata has not much time to lose. It must fulfil its election promise of 'liberty with bread'. That there was neither under Mrs Gandhi fewer and fewer people will care to remember. It is a measure of India's economic problems that while Congress could fool the people for 30 years with its talk of democratic socialism, grumblers are already trying to give Janata a bad name. As a fellow guest at the Bangalore wedding put it: 'Churchill was discarded by the British electorate soon after he made democracy safe from Hitler.' The comparison is not quite flattering to the British Labour Party. But the message is loud, clear – and unnerving. If the Desai Administration fails to grapple with the economic challenges, the people of India may once again become a willing party to the jettisoning of liberty – even if that also means a politically resurrected Mrs Gandhi.

New Delhi

Christopher Hitchens

The New American Left

A tiny thing happened in the United States Congress this year. Congressman Ronald Dellums, a black radical from California, declared publicly for socialism and joined a socialist organisation. He thus became the first socialist in Congress since 1926, when Meyer London from New York City was unseated by La Guardia.

The group he joined was and is called the Democratic Socialist Organising Committee. It operates out of one of those dingy offices off Union Square in New York, and basks in the recognition of the Socialist International even though it still regards itself as a faction of the Democratic Party. Its founder and chairman, Michael Harrington, the secular saint of the American Left, thinks that American socialism is still at the stage of Lib-Lab pact (so who are we to be superior?) but aspires to full party status.

With the retreat and collapse of the ultra-left Sixties, and the discrediting of the Republican right and the Democratic old guard, the moment for social democracy in the US is in many ways propitious. A wide assortment of people apparently think so. Henry Fairlie in the *New Republic* has been almost lyrical in his praise of the DSOC, calling them 'the clean breath of our century' and other embarrassing things. He is not the only one, of course, who finds it a touch incongruous that so many Americans should eat dogfood and go workless in the most prosperous surroundings in history. The word 'socialist' is becoming a little less dirty and dangerous (unless you are Tom Hayden, that former firebrand, who won't sign up because he thinks the word puts people off).

Others have not been so cautious. A respectable group of economists is associated with DSOC. Galbraith sends donations and sympathy. Nobel economics prizewinner Kenneth Arrow has signed up. So have Robert Lekachman and Lester Thurow (who was a Carter campaign adviser). Old Left veterans like Irving Howe, the editor of *Dissent*, are there of course. So is founder-feminist Gloria Steinem. But most remarkably, DSOC has attracted the support of some major figures in America's most conservative layer – the trade union bureaucracy. Victor Reuther is vice-chairman of DSOC. Jerry Wurf of the Municipal Workers is a sympathiser. So is Douglas Fraser of the United Auto Workers.

This, as they say, gets George Meany where he lives. For so long accustomed to treating official labour as a reactionary fief, he now finds himself in direct contact with men who want to dump him. Which is ironic, because the DSOC grew out of a split in the old American Socialist Party between the 'Democratic Left' and the cold-war Meanyites, who now have their own right-wing splinter grouped around the AFL-CIO leadership. These men have the lasting and wonderful distinction of being nearly the last political formation in America to see the Vietnam war as a 'mistake'. After the Nixon Christmas bombing Harrington led his sympathisers out, and ever since then an angry Congressman of the same name from Massachusetts has had to issue almost monthly denials that he is the author of *The Twilight of Capitalism*.

DSOC characterises the Carter administration as 'moderate Republican' on the home front, and point to the cluster of broken promises about minority rights, abortion and welfare. But full employment is the axis of their campaign. When Michael Harrington wrote *The Other America* in 1962, he compelled President Kennedy to declare the 'war on poverty' which became, under Nixon, a war on the poor. He hopes for better luck next time.

A large portrait of Karl Marx greets the visitor to the DSOC office, and Harrington considers himself a Marxist with a couple of volumes of qualification, but there is no party dogma or doctrine. The organisation no longer goes in for tortuous arguments on how to characterise the USSR, but simply makes it obligatory for members to defend the rights of Russian dissidents. On the other great foreign policy issue for the American Left – Israel – DSOC takes a Carterist view that American aid should persist but that Palestinian rights should in some way be recognised and enshrined. This relaxed approach is, no doubt, sensible for a growing party of some 2,200 souls, but may prove troublesome in the future.

Within the Democratic Party mainstream, DSOC is at the minute campaigning for a regular annual convention instead of the tradition whereby there are nominating conventions every four years and occasional sessions of psychological reinforcement in between. Carter is pledged to hold a convention in 1978, and Harrington wants to ensure that it is not just for applause and sycophancy. At the last convention DSOC's forces were split between the camps of Birch Bayh, Mo Udall and Fred Harris. Next time they hope to form a united front.

In 1906 Werner Sombart wrote his famous book *Why Is There No Socialism in the United States?* He answered his own question by pointing to the essentially democratic character of the country, to the relative prosperity of the worker and to the availability of new land and frontiers in the West. His conclusion was that 'all the factors that till now have prevented the development of socialism in the United States are about to disappear or be converted into their opposite'. It could be said by the least cynical that his prediction had skipped a generation or three. But then, even ten years ago, it would not have been predicted that 11 union presidents and half the Congressional black circus would support a socialist convention initiative. Perhaps, so far as social democracy is concerned, the New World may yet be brought in to redress the balance of the Old.

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Santiago Carrillo

Eurocommunism & Social Democracy

The 'Eurocommunist' phenomenon is not a 'tactical manoeuvre on the part of Moscow', as some Spanish – and non-Spanish – reactionaries say. It is an autonomous strategic conception, in the process of formation, born of the experience of those concerned and of concrete reality. Anyone who judges us impartially will be bound to recognise that this strategy has not been worked out with a view to 'extending Soviet influence', nor in order to upset the correlation of military forces on our continent. In that sphere it aims at transcending the policy of blocs, at ensuring the independence of every one of our countries, and of Europe as a whole. It aims at achieving a situation in which Europe as such has a bigger say in preserving peace, international cooperation and the establishment of equitable and democratic international relations, especially with the Third World. Perhaps for that very reason, what is now commonly known as 'Eurocommunism' may be the object of anathema on one side, while on the other it is identified in a tendentious way with the opposing bloc; that is to say, it is opposed both by those who think that communism must be an instrument of Soviet policy and by those who see Europe as a simple extension of the American empire.

Although the communist tendency which I am trying to define may be valid, as regards essentials, for any developed capitalist country – as is proved by Japan – if the prefix 'Euro' can be accepted it is because, basing ourselves on the reality of each one of the countries of our continent and taking that as the starting point, the socialist forces of each state cannot detach themselves from a certain common strategy on the European level. This tendency, in order to maintain itself and achieve victory, needs coordinated action on a European scale. It is precisely this that can contribute decisively to the creation of a united Europe, standing on its own feet, bringing the continent's resources into play and making it possible for it to fulfil a role of its own within the global balance of forces, which is going through a phase of regionalisation.

On the other hand, *there cannot be any confusion* between Eurocommunism and social democracy in the ideological sphere, not at least with social democracy as it has manifested itself up to now. What is commonly called 'Eurocommunism' proposes to *transform* capitalist society, not to *administer* it; to work out a socialist alternative to the system of state monopoly capitalism, not to integrate in it and become one of its governmental variants. That is to say, it proposes to develop the world revolutionary process, which today is an objective social necessity, in order to escape from the blind alley into which mankind has been led by the model of capitalist development.

At the same time, the Eurocommunist strategy aims to bring about a convergence with the socialist and social democratic parties, with the progressive Christian forces, with all the democratic groups that are not henchmen of monopoly-type property. These aims are not contradictory, if social development is seen as a fluid and changing process and not as something static.

The historical reasons for the division between communists and socialists exist, and it is outside the scope of my intentions to make a thorough analysis of them. We communists assume full responsibility, insofar as we ourselves are concerned, for our history, with its correct judgments, its errors and its shortcomings, without disowning it or converting it into a self-congratulatory legend, but regarding it in a critical spirit.

If the socialist and social democratic parties continue, for their part, an analagous process, more or less open – for at times political parties of various kinds carry out self-criticism more by correcting their strategy and tactics than by historical analysis, at least in the first period – there is no reason for not healing the split of 1920 and arriving at a convergence on the basis of scientific socialism and democracy. A process of that kind seems to me to be the basis of the evolution which has led in France to the Union of the Left.

The parties included in the Eurocommunist trend are agreed on the need to advance to socialism with democracy, a multi-party system, parliaments and representative institutions, sovereignty of the people regularly exercised through universal suffrage, trade unions independent of the state and of the parties, freedom for the opposition, human rights, religious freedom, freedom for cultural, scientific and artistic creation, and the development of the broadest forms of popular participation at all levels and in all branches of social activity. Side by side with this, in one form or another, the parties claim their total independence in relation to any possible international leading centre and to the socialist states, without ceasing on that account to be internationalist. They devote great attention to solidarity with the countries of the Third World which are fighting against colonialism and neo-colonialism and for the increasing democratisation of international relations.

These parties are striving for cooperation and peaceful coexistence, for overcoming the policy of military blocs, for the dismantling of foreign bases, whatever country they may belong to; for the prohibition of nuclear weapons and for disarmament; non-interference in the affairs of other countries; and the exercise of the right to self-determination for all peoples.

These communist parties have been developing, not always at the same pace, an ideological and political fabric which distinguished them from others. Is that difference something which has happened overnight, or is it the result of a longer process with roots in the past?

The answer to this question is of some interest because, depending on what it is, it either takes away or adds substance and credibility to our present relations; and, in fact, it is true that a change of this kind always has a long period of incubation.

Yes, it would be absurd to believe that this difference has arisen overnight – whatever the forms which its political emergence has taken – in a way which is already unmistakable. For some people the differences began to become visible after the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union; they were abruptly sharpened in 1968 with the invasion of Czechoslovakia. For others – the Japanese, for example – the critical point came perhaps at the time when the Chinese-Soviet differences began to make themselves manifest.

Already in the Fifties the British communists worked out a programme in which it was envisaged that the transition to socialism would take place in conditions of democracy. This initiative preceded the period of the opening up of new horizons associated with the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, at which the possibility of a peaceful and parliamentary transition to socialism was established; this circumstance favoured the emergence of ideas which already existed in the minds of men like Pollitt and Gollan.

Santiago Carrillo, General Secretary of the Spanish Communist Party, clandestinely entered Spain in February of last year, soon after Franco's death and the French Communists' repudiation of the term 'Dictatorship of the Proletariat'. While in hiding in Madrid, up until his arrest in December, he wrote Eurocommunism and the State. *It was published in Spain the following April. However, it was not until a week after Spain's June election that the Soviet Weekly* Novie Vrena *in a long, vituperative article denounced the book's interpretation of Western communism as 'answering exclusively to the interests of imperialism'. As a result the polemical last chapter entitled 'Dictatorship of the Proletariat' which describes the Soviet state as a block to socialism has attracted most international attention, but the book's purpose is to explain Eurocommunism.*

Eurocommunism and the State, *from which the* NEW STATESMAN *has taken these extracts, is to be published by Lawrence and Wishart on 24 November: £5.95 Cloth and £2.75 Paperback.*

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Words' worth.

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In 1956 it was the Italians, for their part, and especially Palmiro Togliatti, who penetrated most deeply into the causes of the phenomena condemned by Khrushchev at the Twentieth Congress, and into events such as those in Hungary. Togliatti was able to put his finger on the key: *the problem lay in the political system*. Although criticism of this system was not developed (not, at least, in public), from that time on the Italian road to socialism began to stand out in what was an increasingly pronounced way.

The Historic Compromise

Among western communist leaders Palmiro Togliatti was probably the one who had lived for the longest time in the Soviet Union and consequently knew it best. He had worked for many years in the small group who really took decisions in the Communist International; he had experienced the various factional struggles and had seen how they were settled. It is probable that on more than one occasion he had been obliged to use all his skill in order to escape from the snares and traps of the system. The experience of the Popular Fronts, and especially the Popular Front in Spain, the building of the new Italian Republic, the territorial conflict over Trieste – in which he took a very determined independent and national stand – had given him valuable experience of a different kind, which had left him better equipped than many other leaders, above all if one adds to this his vast cultural background and his cool and lucid intellect. From the Eighth Congress of the Italian Communist Party onwards, an autonomous line emerged, which Togliatti expounded to some extent at the World Conference of 1969 and which again manifested itself in the famous Yalta memorandum, regarded as his political testament – an autonomous line which continued to be affirmed later under the leadership of Luigi Longo and which culminated in the conception of the 'historic compromise' with Berlinguer.

Already, earlier on, the Yugoslav experience had contributed towards driving forward the trends of autonomy and ideological creativeness. In 1948 many communist parties, including the Spanish party, following the tradition of unconditional support for the Soviet Union, with the endorsement in this case of the important group of parties which made up the Cominform, followed like a flock of sheep the condemnation levelled against Comrade Tito and the other Yugoslav leaders, and went so far in that unconditional support that when Khrushchev had the courage publicly to dismantle the whole edifice, we felt that we had been so cruelly deceived and so vilely manipulated and this completed the demolition of what remained of the mythical and almost religious element in our attitude towards the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

While there are in our past political positions features on which our present political line is based – I am referring here to the case of Spain – anyone who examines the experience of the Western European communist parties after the second world war will see that they have adjusted their activity to democratic practices, without overstepping them at any time. In 1945 communists were taking part as ministers in all the governments of Western Europe except in Britain and the Federal Republic of Germany, and not just because the anti-Hitler coalition existed between the USSR and the Western powers, although this helped, but because during the resistance to Hitlerism in Europe, the communists were in the forefront – as on every occasion when liberty had to be fought for – and thus won an outstanding position among the forces which in each country played the leading part in opening the way to victory.

The years from 1945 to 1947 were the years of the greatest democratic expansion on our continent. In 1947 the beginning of the cold war created a new correlation of forces; there was the union between the social-democratic forces and the bourgeoisie under the aegis of the United States, against the communists. Following this, the communists left the governments and went into opposition without attempting, in any western country, to hold on by force to the positions they were losing in the governments.

Democratic Rules

It will be said that this attitude corresponded to the division of zones of influence established at Yalta by the great powers. What is certain, however, is that in Greece, at that time, civil war was raging and the communists were fighting with arms in their hands against the existing authorities, who were backed by the Americans, and it seems clear that at Yalta Greece remained on the Western side. In countries like Italy and France the communists were very strong and if the party had called on them to recover the arms that had been buried in the resistance, they would have done so and would have fought. Perhaps they would have been defeated, but they would have put up a considerable fight. Nevertheless they preferred to follow the democratic rules. They continued to develop a strategy directed towards unity and democracy – one which at that time might have seemed utopian – and in the course of long experience they worked out their own road to socialism based on democracy. It seems more convenient to many persons to judge the Western communists by this or that phrase, or by the acts of other brother parties than by the entire road which they have travelled – a road which has been long enough and consistent enough to provide the best of proofs.

In the course of charting the new roads, what was hardest to accomplish was the winning of autonomy in relation to the Soviet Union. The traditional links which united the communists with the USSR had been maintained after the war, in spite of the dissolution of the Communist International, among other things because of the immense growth of Soviet prestige throughout the world, following the outstanding and decisive part played by the USSR in defeating Nazism.

The Cold War seemed, not only to communists, but also to many people who were simply progressive, to be yet another repetition of the imperialist attempts to destroy the socialist gains with fire and the sword. The theories of Foster Dulles and his like bore this out. At a time when, in addition, the United States had an overwhelming nuclear superiority, the idea would not readily have occurred to any communist of breaking the bonds of deep feeling uniting him with the country of the first socialist revolution.

Nevertheless, at least for some parties, and, of course, for the Communist Party of Spain, the dissolution of the Communist International in 1943 disturbed the type of relations which they had with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Following that dissolution, I do not remember any turn, any important political decision about which our party consulted the Soviet party beforehand; while on some occasions, more by chance than not, because it coincided with journeys made for other purposes (Spaniards lived in emigration in the Soviet Union), we informed the Soviet Party after the event.

The actual formation of the Cominform took us by surprise and although we did not make this public, it did not afford us any pleasure. What was the significance of that step? What role was that august body, about which we had not even been consulted, going to arrogate to itself?

A revealing fact regarding the change that had taken place in practice in the relations with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was that one month before Yugoslavia was denounced by the Cominform, a delegation of ours was in Belgrade having discussions with Comrade Tito; it would not for one moment have occurred to us to consult Moscow about this, nor did we have the slightest idea of the conflict that was about to break out.

An Unforgivable Error

None the less, the changes were still not great enough to prevent us from falling into the unforgivable error of supporting the Cominform's condemnation of Yugoslavia, which had been arrived at, moreover, without informing or consulting the other parties, presenting us with a *fait accompli* which we either had to reject or accept, for whoever rejected it would also have ended up by being excommunicated. During that period excommunications were still the accepted thing, and I do not believe that any party was ready to run that risk. In any case, those who had taken the initiative in setting up the Cominform had set up, together with it, a rather special kind of internationalism in which the vast majority of the communist parties were reduced to the role of supernumeraries, an 'internationalism' that is quite reminiscent of what is now called 'socialist internationalism', which puts in a privileged position the relations among a group of socialist countries – not all of them – and which, fundamentally, whatever the formal denials that may be made, aims to maintain in existence, at all costs, a world centre.

To put it simply, in the first period the

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dissolution of the Communist International meant for us a division of labour: *'We look after the affairs of Spain and there we hold undisputed sway. The Soviet comrades look after world affairs, for they have the experience, the information and greater global responsibility.'* It was not until later that we realised that in order to tackle and solve the problems of Spain in a satisfactory way, we also had to concern ourselves with the affairs of the world, including the socialist world.

For us, for the Communist Party of Spain, the culminating point in winning our independence was the occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968. The preparations for that operation had been carried out with methods similar to those employed in the famous trials in 1936, which had been exposed at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, or similar to those used in the denunciation of Yugoslavia in 1946. That is to say, a bald statement was made – in this case that Czechoslovakia was on the yerge of falling into the hands of capitalism – and with that statement as the starting point, stories were concocted that were light-years away from the truth. This was far more than we could be expected to swallow. Czechoslovakia was the straw which broke the camel's back and led our parties to say: 'No.' That kind of 'internationalism' had come to an end as far as we were concerned. It is precisely to that, to what we have called the 'old internationalism', that, so far as we are concerned, an end must be put. True internationalism is and must be something else.

I realise that writing in this way – for everyone is already *talking* in this way, within four walls – lays one open to misunderstanding and blame, but it has to be done. Why not let us get used to the truth? Everyone would gain by it and we should be laying the foundations for a genuine and healthy internationalism.

At the risk of being accused of further heresy, I am convinced that Lenin was no more than half right when he said:

> The transition from capitalism to communism, naturally, cannot fail to provide an immense abundance and diversity of political forms, but the essence of all of them will necessarily be a single one: *the dictatorship of the proletariat.*

He was no more than half right because the essence of all the various political forms of transition to socialism is, as we can judge today, the hegemony of the working people, while the diversity and abundance of political forms likewise entails the possibility of the dictatorship of the proletariat not being necessary.

I therefore regard it as logical that the communist and socialist parties of the developed capitalist West should establish, not just their tactics, but their entire strategy on the basis of the democratic process. And when we say this and renounce, in our countries, the dictatorship of the proletariat, we are neither wolves who are donning sheep's clothing in order to cover up sinister schemes, nor are we abandoning revolutionary Marxism in order to line up with social-democratic positions. In actual fact the lack of democratic 'credibility' of us communists among certain sections of the population in our countries is associated – rather than with our own activity and policy – with the fact that in countries where capitalist ownership has disappeared, the dictatorship of the proletariat has been implanted, with a one-party system, as a general rule, and has undergone serious bureaucratic distortions and even very grave processes of degeneration. The contradictory aspect of this is that for many years, while we ourselves were pursuing a democratic policy, we took to ourselves and defended that model as if it had been our own, without any critical attitude. This, which was justified when the USSR was the only socialist country, ceased to be so after the second world war, when the correlation of forces on the world scene had undergone a radical change.

There were a number of years during which Khrushchev personified a new spirit of receptiveness towards the outside world and of greater freedom inside the country. This coincided with successes such as the launching of the first Sputnik, Gagarin's journey into space, new currents in Soviet literature and cinema, a cleaning up of the special repressive bodies and greater supervision over them. This was a period which resulted in a rise in the international prestige of the Soviet Union; however, it came to a speedy end.

Khrushchev was deposed by a sort of palace coup. His mistakes were 'exposed', when we had all come to believe that at last there was a collective leadership jointly responsible for good and ill. One of the causes of Khrushchev's downfall may have been his inability to transform the state apparatus created under Stalin, the *system*

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of political power to which Togliatti had referred, and which eventually crushed Khrushchev. That system has not been transformed; it has not been made more democratic and it has even retained many of its aspects of coercion in relations with the socialist states of the East, as was brought out with brutal clarity by the occupation of Czechoslovakia.

Suppression & Evolution

The massive and annihilating repression of Stalin's day has ended. Khrushchev, deposed, died at home in his bed. There has been progress, tarnished by forms of oppression and repression in certain fields – and naturally in that of culture. Yet we still do not find ourselves looking at a state that can be regarded as a workers' democracy. This affects the credibility of our party more, much more, than if the dictatorship of the proletariat really existed in the USSR. If *bourgeois democracies* have much that is purely formal, this is also true of the workers' democracy so far achieved by the communists.

The present Soviet state has certainly carried out the functions of achieving development in the economic, industrial and cultural fields, and in the field of health, and also in that of national defence. In other words, it has carried out tasks which in other countries of advanced capitalism have been carried out by the capitalist state. Having suppressed capitalist property, it has created the conditions for going over to evolved socialism. The question that now arises is whether the actual structures of that state have not been transformed, at least in part, into an obstacle to evolved socialism; whether that state, as it now exists, is not in itself already a brake on the development of a real working-class democracy and, in addition, whether it has not constituted a brake on the country's material development.

The question is whether that state, which is no longer capitalist, is not an intermediate phase between the capitalist and the genuine socialist state, in the same way as the absolute monarchies were an intermediate phase between feudalism and modern capitalist parliamentary democracies.

The context within which the global confrontation presents itself today does not favour the transformation of the Soviet state into a state of working-class democracy. It is a context of force which puts in the forefront the role of the army and of the forces which assist it; a context in which the tendency is rather to affirm uniformity than to favour discussion: to consolidate authority rather than develop democracy. A state in which the army and the organs of authority have such an important role, even though it is a state without capitalists and even though it supports the struggle of peoples for their liberation, does run the risk of regarding strength as its first aim. It tends to convert ideology into an instrument of power; to see the problems of the class struggle, of the struggle for liberation, the struggle for socialism, on a world scale, as complementing its strength in the global confrontation in which it is involved; to see in internationalism something which reinforces its strength and to make it into an instrument.

National Victories

We in the communist parties which are functioning in the capitalist countries cannot accept the idea that the victory of socialism is determined in the confrontation between the countries in which capitalists no longer exist and those which still preserve capitalism. The world of today is different. Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the US State Department admitted this:

> So the Soviets will be seen and heard on the world stage no matter what we do . . . We have to get away from seeing détente as a process which appeases or propriates Soviet power. We have to see our task as managing or domesticating this power. That is our central problem in the years ahead . . . Our challenge is how to live in a world with another super-power, and anticipate the arrival of a third super-power, China, in 20 years or so. (Speech at US Ambassadors' meeting in London, December 1976).

If in the past, in some countries, the revolution was victorious as a result of military defeat, which made it easier for the working people to remove the ruling classes responsible for that defeat, this does not mean that an identical road has been mapped out for us. We want neither wars nor military defeats between the capitalist world and the socialist world. It is not a question of the East inflicting a military defeat on the West. The question must be removed entirely from this nonsensical context. The removal of the capitalists as the ruling class must be carried out in each country, and each people must do this on its own account, with its own efforts, without losing its national identity. The role of the communists in the West is not to strengthen the military bloc of the East; it is to carry out the political and social transformation in their own countries.

The socialist revolution in the capitalist West should involve the defeat and the political and social removal of the exploiting classes; but not the national defeat of those countries by foreign powers.

With the victory of socialism, by bringing to these countries a further development of the historic democratic gains, eliminating the exploitation of man by man and establishing equitable and fraternal relations, we communists shall work for the strengthening, the advance of the country of our birth, so as to cooperate in that way in the progress of mankind and not in any way to subordinate our countries to others.

Already today our struggle against imperialism foreshadows our desire for democratic relations on an equal footing, and not relations of subordination, with all countries, whatever they are, for the future. We shall never mortgage our independence to anyone, for the sake of any ideological or material interests.

In Kissinger's speech at the US Ambassadors' meeting there are a number of interesting statements which confirm the purely capitalist content of American policy and have the merit of throwing aside the hypocritically democratic camouflage:

> There are people who think that we are too intransigent in our attitude towards these Western communist parties. But we cannot encourage the progress of these parties nor permit the setting of a precedent in which, by our inaction, we have facilitated the success of a communist party. *The extent to which such a party follows Moscow's line is unimportant. Even if Portugal had followed the Italian model, we would still have been opposed.* It is not just because Cunhal is a Stalinist that we are in opposition. Even the impact of an Italian Communist Party that seemed to be governing effectively would be devastating – on France, and on Nato too.
>
> It is difficult to see how we could have Nato discussions if these various communist parties of Western Europe did achieve control of governments. We could, as with China, perhaps have parallel policies. But the alliance, as it is now, could not survive. *The western alliance has always had an importance beyond military security.* (*New York Times* 7 April 1977; S.C.'s italics.)

American Imperialism

Kissinger *dixit*. For him the question is not whether a communist party 'follows Moscow's line', which, as he sees it, means acting as a component part of Soviet power; he even supports, for instance, the idea that the Yugoslav communists should be 'less disagreeable' towards Moscow. In reality, the equilibrium of military strength does not matter to him; that equilibrium is now determined, not so much by alliances, or even by bases, as by the development of nuclear strength. Those alliances may vanish but the equilibrium will remain. What he is concerned about is that the social system should not change in Western Europe – for that reason the alliance has always gone 'beyond military security'. He does not look at the alliance in terms of military defence but in terms of the military pressure of the alliance against the social changes which each country may want to introduced in a democratic way.

The admission is important also because it torpedoes certain oversimplified dogmatic arguments according to which an independent position with regard to the USSR is equivalent to an approach to US imperialism, whereas in fact American imperialism is more worried by an independent and democratic stand by a communist party than by a follow-my-leader dogmatic one, for with this latter approach it will be hard for a communist party to reach, and above all to *continue to hold*, governing positions in a developed country in the capitalist West.

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Peter Taylor

The Men on the Blanket

'Stonemason will not break us' is one of the more printable slogans that adorn the Falls Road. Observers can be forgiven for thinking that its recent lick of paint was not to mark the Queen's visit but to boost flagging Republican morale. The Provos are having a hard time, and not just on the military front. They're losing the propaganda war.

Even as little as a year ago, the existence of 170 men refusing to wear prison uniform, naked except for a blanket, confined to their cells 24 hours a day, denied their statutory one hour's exercise a day, deprived of books and all effective communication with the outside world, would have excited mass protests, riots and weighty editorials on human rights. A concerned lawyer might even have brought their case to the attention of Strasbourg: after all, they were only demanding the restoration of the 'special category' status that a British government, and a Tory one at that, had granted them in tacit recognition that their motives were political. But times and public opinion have changed. Today the 170 men on the blanket in the Maze Prison at Long Kesh (the name refuses to die) are little different in nature and motive to those whose demands William Whitelaw granted in 1972 in what he now admits was one of the biggest mistakes of his political career. But now they are convicted, sentenced and treated like the common criminals that Roy Mason insists them to be and the British public and press prefer to think they are.

The Provisionals are having to swallow a bitter pill and few sympathise with their discomfort in doing so. At a rally in Belfast a fortnight ago in support of political status, the number of men on the blanket locked in the H-Block of the M[illegible] prison outnumbered the people who [illegible]hered to support them. When a handful of women moved to occupy the nearby American Embassy, to divert President Carter's concern for human rights from the Soviet Union to Northern Ireland, morning shoppers in Belfast, and no doubt President Carter too, ignored them. Roy Mason, a few miles away at Stormont, basking in the first birthday tributes the press were glowingly paying him, probably sucked on his pipe with added satisfaction knowing that the myth of Special Category Status and all the nonsense that went with it was, like British withdrawal from Ulster, 'dead forever'.

The team at the Northern Ireland Office play the prisons and the protesters in them with a bat as straight as their captain's fellow Yorkshireman, Geoffrey Boycott. The men on the blankets are not at issue. Period. 'If 170 men chose not to avail themselves of the considerable amenities of the brand new H-Blocks at the Maze and of the new uniforms on offer that is their business, not ours.' is a not unfair summary of the Northern Ireland Office's position. It's a clever one. It takes two to start a fight. The Provisionals' propaganda machine makes the Black Hole of Calcutta look like a holiday camp compared with the H-blocks. 'The place is bad enough without telling lies about it,' sighed a respected priest from Andersonstown who visits the H-blocks three times a week. The problem is simply lack of information. Small wonder that atrocity stories abound: of men living in their own faeces; of Loyalist heavies specially imported to brutalise the prisoners; of men going mad through staring at four white walls. 'Ignorance,' says the priest, 'is hard to live with.'

Knowledge puts paid to the wilder allegations. There are five H-blocks completed in the Maze (three more are being built). Each is a single-storey building in the shape of an H, with a hundred cells for a hundred prisoners – 25 along each leg of the H. Cells measure 10' x 8', small but lighter and airier than their Victorian counterparts that tend to house the rest of the UK's prison population. They are designed for single occupation – but prisoners are forced to double up, not because the authorities are sadistic but because they've nowhere else to put them. As 'common criminals', there are no distinctions made between Loyalists and Republicans. All live together in the same wings but do not share cells. 'Would you put a black and a white in a cell together?' remarked a prison officer. But for meals, recreation and exercise, the prisoners segregate themselves into their own paramilitary groups.

The men on the blanket, for security reasons and administrative ease, are all confined to one block – H5. With the exception of 20 members of the IRA Official, they are all Provisionals. There are no Loyalists: unlike Republicans, they have no tradition of prison protest but pay admiring respect to their paramilitary enemies who have. Their leaders outside believe that they've done their bit when they go to gaol and see no reason why they should suffer more.

As the prisoner is not permitted to leave his cell without wearing prison uniform, the protest effectively confines him there for the best part of 24 hours a day. A pile of prison clothes, underwear as well, has been lying in the corner of many of the cells for the better part of a year – untouched by the prisoner who wears nothing but a blanket. He's allowed to 'slop out' twice a day, naked or wearing a towel. He's denied his statutory one hour's exercise as he is forbidden to take it naked or wearing a towel or a blanket. The prison authorities don't offer the football kit they provide for the rest of the prisoners. In theory protestors are allowed to take books from the well-stocked library but they can't leave their cells to collect them. Only religious literature is allowed in from outside. *Ben Hur* is in great demand. They can read the *Catholic Herald* but are forbidden to do the crossword. A prisoner is allowed to send and receive one letter a month, each carefully read and censored. And there are further humiliations. Once a fortnight the protestors are punished by the Governor for refusing to obey prison rules. For a period of three days, all personal effects (photographs and home memorabilia) are removed from a protestor's cell as is his mattress and bedding during the daylight hours. He's left with a chair, table, a bible and a chamber pot. And, of course, his blanket. Even prison officers bear them a grudging respect. 'They must believe in it to do it,' acknowledged one, 'it can't be just a pubilicity stunt.'

Morale in H5, low throughout the summer months, is said to have perked up as some of the new prisoners are joining their colleagues on the blankets now the courts are open again for business. The new inmates bring the protestors, denied all newspapers and information, precious news of the world outside. In particular, says the priest, they look for signs that the Government is weakening, that concessions are on the way to release them from their protest. But they look for hope where none exists. Governments make concessions only when political considerations force them to do so. The political and military situation was very different when Whitelaw granted 'special category' status in 1972. Roy Mason is on top and he knows it. Unless events inside or outside the Maze take a dramatic turn, the protest and the issue of political status will die a slow death as men gradually exchange their blankets for the pile of prison clothes in the corner of the cell. When this happens, there will be no trumpets of victory from Stormont Castle: just a quiet satisfaction that the protest died as it lived, largely unreported and unnoticed – except in a cutting in Roy Mason's scrapbook.

Roger Woddis

Song of Praise

'Everyone is perfectly satisfied.' –
Reginald Maudling.

Praise the lord of Bedwell Lodge,
  Save the guiltless from attack;
Wonder at the artful dodge
  When he tries to buy it back.
Smile upon this smiling kid,
  Offer him a large cigar;
Question not the things he did
  For his love of caviar.

Glory to his acumen,
  Follow his initiative;
Praise the ways of public men
  And the wits by which they live.
Sing the saint-seducing gold,
  Sanctify the heart that cares;
Let the busy scribes be told
  It is no concern of theirs.

Carpers have been hard to please
  Ever since the world began;
Ponder on Diogenes
  Looking for an honest man.
Let our sanguine voices blend:
  'Everyone is satisfied.'
None knows where the trail will end,
  Once we turn to Reggiecide.

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Profile: François Mitterrand

The Chancer

When François Maurice Marie Mitterrand ascends the Brighton rostrum bringing fraternal greetings from France, this aspirant socialist prime minister and president of the French Republic will not be speaking in the language of Shakespeare. Nor even that mid-Atlantic, cassette-honed version of it which is part nowadays of every European statesman's professional tool-box. Like Georges Pompidou, his deceased political enemy, the leader of the French Left is more at home with Latin than English, more familiar with the culture of Ancient Greece than that of the delegates he will address. It is not surprising that he will require the services of an interpreter to make himself understood, and also to understand.

It is a long way from Brighton to the Boulevard St Germain where François Mitterrand is quintessentially *chez lui*, walking from the Rue de la Bièvre along wet pavements to the Brasserie Lipp, a commanding figure in a midnight blue cashmere overcoat, always surrounded by a coterie of old friends and admirers, hard verbal people with disabused eyes and complicated sex lives. Their children, and in some cases even their mistresses' children's children, since this is a generation of oldish people, may have learned the delights of Marks and Spencer and sweet British tea. But for the parents we are alien and generally hostile people, distant as the Japanese, certainly more incomprehensible than the Russians.

You might think that French socialism's leader would bridge this cultural chasm. But this is very far from the case. Mitterrand is just as much a man behind a mask to French as to foreign socialists. He inspires a sense of unease, an impression of concealment, a feeling that, despite his enormous talents, he is at home neither with his fellow-men nor himself.

On his last visit to England in September 1976 one of our Paris diplomats, aware of the Frenchman's apparent closedness to Anglo-Saxon life, had Mitterrand driven to Kew Gardens. He was entranced by the place, probably because his own country estate in Les Landes in south-west France was reclaimed thanks to a 19th-century programme of forestation. Anyone who regards this region as home has a highly developed feeling for trees. Mitterrand's is such that the aides had trouble getting him away from Kew for meetings with Callaghan and the late Tony Crosland.

Of Harold Wilson Mitterrand is quoted as saying: 'He may call himself a socialist. I find him an opportunist without conviction or scruple.' These are exactly the terms generally used to castigate the socialist leader himself, and it is worth examining his career in the light of them.

The crucial period is the second world war, from which Mitterrand emerged with considerable credit having survived a series of tricky bends *en route*. His position, it should be said, was never as equivocal as that of his fellow partner in the Union of the Left, Georges Marchais, who actually worked in Germany as a volunteer on a Messerschmitt production line. Unlike the Communist leader, Mitterrand fought as an enlisted man in the French army, was captured, imprisoned in Germany, and after two attempts at escaping which failed, he finally brought it off.

Unfortunately, in the light of the subsequent events, he then landed up in the so-called 'Free Zone' where he became a minor civil servant in the Vichy administration. Later, he was able to establish himself as a Resistance leader of some importance, and to explain the *pétainiste* interim as no more than an obligatory cover. Nonetheless, his period as a Vichy functionary, marked naturally by unusual efficiency and distinction, led to his being awarded the most important medal that Marshal Pétain bestowed on the faithful (known as the '*Francisque*'). He never collected this decoration, needless to say, and indeed in a ribbon-wearing country it is perhaps the only mark of distinction which the French avoid as a buttonhole embellishment.

Mitterrand was on a list of candidates for another ribbon which, on the contrary, everyone uses, including a certain number of people who are not entitled to it. But General de Gaulle, casting a magisterial eye over the names slated as Companions of the Resistance, erased Mitterrand. Virtually all the General's post-war political allies wore this decoration as a kind of *imprimatur*, the Gaullist equivalent of what Tom Wolfe, writing about astronauts, characterised as 'The Brotherhood of the Real Stuff'. His exclusion from this fraternity meant that during the 1944-46 post-war

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Gaullist administration François Mitterrand was obliged to live in the political wilderness, editing a newspaper for ex-servicemen, and laying the foundations of a marriage (to the Resistance activist, Danielle Gouze) which has survived peaks and chasms since.

The issue at question was not Mitterrand's patriotism, but his personality – or rather its inter-action with the General's. They met once only during the war and, as an old comrade says, 'it was hate at first sight'. The truth of the matter, as far as can be ascertained rather more than 30 years on, was that De Gaulle wished to take over the escape network for ex-POWs which Mitterrand had painfully established, and Mitterrand said he did not wish to be taken over. Since the General shared with the Kennedys a feeling that anyone who was not unconditionally a disciple and sycophant must be by definition an enemy, a disagreement of this nature was sufficient to put Mitterrand in a hostile camp 'for the duration' – which was to say for ever. As Mitterrand reciprocated the General's hostility at least as warmly, they became from that moment on close, eternal enemies. It was this loathing for De Gaulle, as a man quite apart from a politician, which defined François Mitterrand's own political philosophy thereafter.

Thus, when in 1946 De Gaulle retired from political life for what proved to be 12 years, Mitterrand was able to enter into his own political inheritance. When Ramadier appointed him Minister for Ex-servicemen in 1947 he became, at the age of 30, the Benjamin of the new administration, and thereafter, serving in no less than 11 governments of varying political hues from Radical to Centre-Left to Socialist, he came to be the very model of a Fourth Republic politician. It was a period of shifting loyalties, more personal than ideological, of *salon* politics, of deals and double-deals, of black government Citroëns swishing through the night towards yet another accommodation with the ineluctable forces of French post-colonial history.

As Secretary of State for Information, which meant dictator of the radio networks, as Minister of the Interior, which meant law and order executive of the first Algerian crisis, and as Minister of Justice, which meant apologist for torture once that bloody war of independence had got under way, François Mitterrand became France's most important young politician on the way up. He was, or so it was said, deeply involved – as an opponent – in the first misfired plot to assassinate General Salan and install a government of what was called 'Public Safety' under General de Gaulle in Paris. The second time round, this time in May 1958, the plot succeeded, the General returned to power only to disappoint his erstwhile plotters who believed he would guarantee Algeria as a French colony, and François Mitterrand found himself once more in the political desert of opposition. And, despite coming desperately close to power on two occasions since, there Mitterrand has remained. Next March, if the polls are to be believed, he has every chance of making it. But meanwhile there is the erosion of the last two decades to consider. And, perhaps more importantly, the whole question of his commitment to socialism, a process that has happened gradually, and one in which many of his opponents, and perhaps even a certain number of his friends regard with profound scepticism.

Consider Mitterrand's background. In 1936, the tumultuous year of the Popular Front Government in France with the Spanish Civil War on its borders, he was 20, of narrowly independent means, living alone on the Left Bank, experiencing the young man's first taste of adult independence. At possibly the most political moment (particularly for socialists) that France has experienced in the course of the century, he was a fully paid-up non-combatant, taking no part in the action and showing no interest in it. (Had he paid more attention, instead of concentrating solely on his law studies, he might have learnt lessons which would have enabled him to avoid the personal misjudgements and disaster of May 1968).

Again, during the war, returning from Germany and finding himself in contact with Resistance groups of railway workers, almost all of whom were either members of the PCF or Left sympathisers, he apparently felt no *political* solidarity at all. Rather his interest was in the nuts and bolts of clandestine activity. This may have been partly a matter of social class, partly a reflection of the fact that Mitterrand was always a cat who walked alone. His father had actually been involved with the railways, as stationmaster at Angoulême in central France, before branching out successfully into commerce as owner of a vinegar-producing business. But the gap between stationmaster and humble *cheminot* was as great as that between head waiter and dishwasher. The father was rich enough to send his sons to a private Catholic school, one of those academically rigorous and politically reactionary colleges which had survived the Church's disestablishment in 1905. (One in five of all French secondary students still attend these private schools.) From this base, like so many gifted provincials in literature and life, young Mitterrand embarked on the process of 'mounting to Paris'.

Like Poiters and Nevers, Angoulême is the kind of country town foreigners appreciate. For Parisians, who very often turn out to have been born in them, they are used as shorthand terms to indicate the stultification of an upbringing in the sticks. The process of escape often seems to involve as much repudiation as growth, and when combined with a Catholic and bourgeois background it is an uncommon recipe for socialist conviction. It goes more naturally with worldly success. And it was an ideal preparation for Mitterrand's career as a Fourth Republic trimmer *par excellence*.

It has also served him well as architect of the Union of the Left over the last six years, a role in which his talent for negotiation and conciliation, a kind of natural pliancy, has time and again carried him (and the Union) through, when some irreparable collision with the PCF appeared the only outcome. That he had the personal stature to lead the coalition he again owes to his generation, and to General de Gaulle.

As a preliminary to the 1965 presidential election, the fertile brain of Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, who had learned many journalistic tricks in the US, invented 'Monsieur X', a so-called mystery candidate of the Left, who was unveiled over careful months. Mitterrand, happily, for him, was not the man 'JJSS' tried to promote. But he nonetheless found himself standing against De Gaulle in the final run-off after the PR campaign for Gaston Defferre, the very able mayor of Marseilles, found little popularity with the national voters. Mitterrand polled more than 10.6m votes, a higher figure than the Gaullists expected, and one which conferred a kind of legitimacy on Mitterrand thereafter. In the aftermath of the presidential election an electoral pact with the PCF led to another very good result in the 1967 parliamentary polls. This time the Gaullist coalition was left with a majority of only one seat.

But Mitterrand's miscalculation in May 1968 offset the gains of the previous years. During De Gaulle's brief absence (squaring the army in Germany) he made a clumsy effort to fill the power vacuum. For a while it looked as if his political career was over but gradually, after the retirement of Guy Mollet, he became established as the unchallenged leader of the Left. In the course of the seemingly endless negotiations with the PCF, he resisted, for example, the multitude of nationalisations the communists wanted; their proposal to destroy France's atomic weapons: and their desire for a total break with Nato.

In the course of what is now a marathon political career Mitterrand has survived innumerable crises. The current troubles within the Left alliance are as nothing when compared with the bitter ideological disputes and impassioned hatred when Waldeck Rochet led the PCF. Mitterrand has twice appeared finished for personal reasons, both in the 1950s. The first time he was accused of being a Soviet informer within the French cabinet leaking defence secrets, the so-called *'affaire des fuites'*. The second time opponents claimed he had 'invented' and stage-managed an assassination attempt against himself, the *'affaire de l'Observatoire'*.

He found the second charge harder to disprove than the first, although the rumour of a Soviet spy well-placed in the Fourth Republic was persistent, and used by Frederick Forsyth in *The Day of the Jackal*. Few voters now recall either story, or the fact that Mitterrand was once cast as villain. But both smears will surely be given a new lease of life between now and the March elections, which will prove whether Mitterrand is a politician of astonishing resilience, or merely a long-term loser. They will probably not be believed, but along with all the other marginal, indefinable doubts to do with the man's character, as well as the character of the alliance he leads, Giscard and his strategists are hoping they will be enough to keep the Left out in the cold where they have been for 20 years.

In the end the result will turn on Mitterrand's capacity for advocacy, which Labour Party delegates will now have a chance to judge. The recent disputes on the Left have not reduced the percentage (still around 52) of French who say they will vote Left. Yet, oddly, they have sensibly reduced the figure of those who believe the Left will win. The gap indicates the shadow of doubt which still exists in the electoral heart of France. If Mitterrand fails to resolve it this time, he will surely never have another chance.

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London Diary

☐ If ever there was a dead political duck, it's the report that Lord Houghton and his colleagues brought out just over a year ago recommending state aid for political parties. Although David Steel was gallantly trying to disinter it on the eve of the Liberal Assembly, I couldn't find a mention of it in either the Labour or the Tory Party conference agendas. Nor has the report ever been debated on the floor of the House of Commons. I remember mentioning it once to Jim Callaghan – only to get one of his 'Oh-that's-a-dodgy-one' looks. The report has actually been before the cabinet at least once but the current consensus there is that, since the Government can't even bring out a united PLP in favour of it, there's no point in getting a bloody nose for nothing. Poor David Steel: however loudly he and his colleagues sing the praises of Lord Houghton and his working party, it doesn't look as if there's much chance of any supper.

☐ St Columba's, Pont Street is the exiles' favourite Presbyterian church in London – and for the past four months, during the sabbatical of its regular Minister, its pulpit has been occupied by the Liberal leader's father, Dr David Steel, a former Moderator of the Church of Scotland. Having had a thing about Presbyterian divines ever since (years ago) I was dispatched by a Presbyterian editor of the *Guardian* to cover the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, I toddled along on Sunday to hear him. I wouldn't put him in the top flight of Scottish preachers – not, that is to say, in the George MacLeod class; but I'd back him to hold his own in any competition with his son. He had a good, challenging text – 'If you were on trial for your life as a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?' – and knew how to use it as a recitative throughout his sermon. And it was a proper sermon, too – none of that with-it, ten-minute colloquial chat favoured today by trendy Anglicans: it was all there – the blood of the martyrs being the seed of the Church, the overwhelming need for 'grace', the 'real sense in which we are all in this world on trial for our lives'. The Dome at Brighton is, I believe, properly used as a Methodist Hall; but even in such a setting the Boy David will have his work cut out to come across on Saturday as anything like so convincing and convinced an evangelist.

☐ The Pope has done well out of his 80th birthday. Even Paul Johnson, who last month in the US was referring to him as 'an obstinate and vain old man . . . happy to impoverish the spiritual lives of ordinary Catholics' was, I noted, in much more charitable form in the *Sunday Telegraph* last weekend. The Pope, he wrote, had 'lived to see the Church steer itself into calmer waters' and he actually suggested that his birthday was an occasion for 'modest rejoicing'. But there is, of course, a built-in risk in all such anniversaries celebrated in office: the danger, to be blunt about it, is that the various fulsome things said will go to their subject's head. Not that we in Britain can afford to feel snooty about that. It is, after all, less than 25 years since we were celebrating the 80th birthday of a Prime Minister still in office; and no one, despite the great upsurge of emotion that then took place, can possibly consider today that it was either sensible or even defensible for Winston Churchill to have lingered in Downing Street as long as he did. The Americans, I see, now want to put an end to all forms of 'age discrimination' with some worthy in Congress announcing that in his lifetime he has seen the end of 'sexism and racism' and now wants to see 'ageism' go the same way. That sounds all very fine – but if one half of a person's working life is supposed to be an ascent, what's wrong with the other half being accepted as a descent? Leonard Woolf understood that very well, hence the title of his fourth volume of autobiography, *Downhill All the Way*. Too much, I suppose, to hope that some tactless person gave it to Pope Paul for his birthday last Monday.

☐ Either the Metropolitan Police or the *Daily Express* has, I'd have thought, an obligation to reply to the *Sunday Times* on the exact circumstances in which the photographs of last Friday's bank raid found their way into the following day's *Express*. We can all remember when the police and the *Express* played 'footsie' together over the hilarious attempt to arrest Ronald Biggs in Rio de Janeiro; but I would not myself have described that as exactly a shining precedent for future cooperation. As I recall it, the *Express* was very coy then as to how they got the pictures of Biggs in his hotel room; and judging by the resounding silence with which they have so far greeted the perfectly legitimate questions the *Sunday Times* raised they don't seem to have grown any more forthcoming with the years.

☐ Isn't it about time someone – perhaps Michael Meacher, the new chairman of the Consumer Council – really raised a rumpus with the Post Office over the weekend post? No, I'm not going on about the Sunday collection, though in St Martin's-le-Grand they shouldn't kid themselves that all of us have forgotten about their 'experimental' period that turned by a nifty piece of sleight-of-hand into a permanent and unalterable withdrawal of service. What concerns me now is the fate of letters posted on a Friday: I've tried it all ways – going to main post offices, catching the very first post, stamping 'First Class' right alongside the 9p stamp – but nothing seems to make any difference. Even letters posted from one London postal district to another often arrive as late as the following Tuesday. If the Post Office can't offer a better service than that, then it ought at least, like the railways, to offer weekend concession rates. What it should not be allowed to do is to offer a 'first class' service where none exists.

☐ All over tube platforms in the past couple of weeks I've watched groups of travellers standing mesmerised. What's kept them rooted to the spot (even sometimes missing their trains) is a poster. Headed 'London Flooding', it proceeds to pose the direct question 'Would *you* be affected?'. A map of the Thames is intended to supply the answer – though it's a Thames that seems to be as staunchless as the Ganges. Is there safety in Goldhawk Road, will you be on dry land in Little Ilford? Don't count on it. Instead learn your flood drill: the early warnings on the radio and TV giving you four hours' notice, the six 30-second blasts on the siren, the need to be alert, to follow 'the advice given by your local council'. I'm sure it's all prudent, sensible stuff but somehow it all comes as something of a shock. Tides may be strange things but so in Britain is this degree of regimentation. Either someone is determined to relive his war before he retires or 1984 must be nearer than I thought.

☐ This week I feel a man abandoned. For 25 years I've used a certain sort of razor blade – an old fashioned, single-edged Ever-Ready 'precision production' manufactured in Glasgow. I've been a model customer, even when living in Washington, where such blades were not available, burdening visitors with bringing supplies of them over. And what is my reward for this record of loyalty? A cool condescending brush-off in every chemist that I go to – 'Didn't you know, they've given up making them?' Just like that – a lifetime's fidelity cast aside with no apology, no thanks, no word of any kind (apart, that is, from the off-hand, second-hand excuse 'I believe they find batteries more profitable'). But I have news for Ever-Ready. They've sold me the last battery they're ever going to even if it means visiting as many electricians as I've now visited chemists.

Crucifer

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ The prosecutor said he used to go to the girl's home and then climb a fence onto the porch leading to the girl's bedroom window which she left open. Although the defendant never told her why he was coming she guessed. – *Slough Observer* (Mrs David Bland)

☐ Dear Reader, We very much regret that due to circumstances beyond our control, the advertised sachet of mustard could not be included with this issue of *Woman's Own*. If you would still like to have it please write to me at the address shown above and I shall arrange for it to be sent to you together with the refund of your postage. – Insert in *Woman's Own* (Stephen Eminton)

☐ Heal's have furniture to suit every budget. Our suites in leathers, hides and suedes start at £463. – *Heal's Autumn Collection* (M. L. Urry)

☐ It was a week of surprises for Ladybird Books. First of all, the Ministry of Defence asked them for a set of books on how computers work; since, however, the Ladybirds on this subject are designed for 9 to 15-year-olds, the Ministry, with a proper military regard for camouflage, asked that their brass should be enabled to read these concise introductions behind plain brown covers. Ladybird declined this request. – *Bookseller* (Andrew Curry)

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Yvonne Roberts

Luck of the Irish

The 33rd and 34th counties of Ireland, some say, can be found in Hammersmith and Camden. Sheila lives and works in the West of London in the kind of hotel where the sausages come 'dressed' and orange jelly cannot be taken off the menu for fear of upsetting the guests. The prices are so precise (£1.79 for lunch, £2.97 for dinner; £12 *exactly* for a double room) that the hotel obviously entertains those who may be comfortable enough to roam the world but not comfortable enough to forget the cost; no Arabs at this address. The proprietors have got wise on how to prise the pennies. Even the dog-eared paperbacks left by others (*Love in the Sahara, The Carpetbaggers*) are clamped inside a Libromat. Insert 30p and your choice is freed. Leave the book behind and it is returned to the machine's vice-like grip. No expense spared takes on a different meaning here.

Sheila is a waitress, aged 24, from County Leitrim in the West of Ireland. She lives in and receives £23 a week clear for working three shifts, 7.30 a.m. to 11; 12.30 p.m. to 2.30; 6.30 p.m. to nine in the evening, five and a half days a week. She has been in London for five years and has perfected the art of weaving her social life into the pattern of catering hours; late beginnings and short nights. 'I never went wild or nothing', she says, 'like some girls. I act here as I would in Leitrim. I could be living next door to my mother.' And if she were, she adds, she wouldn't expect her mother to know all the truth now, would she?

Sheila wears little make-up, blue nail varnish, is plump and pretty. Her eyes are pink-rimmed, coloured by too little sleep. She favours 'good' clothes (two long dresses from C&A at about £12 each 'though they do look silly on the tube', she says. And eight or nine dresses bought 'to last'.) Tonight, a Friday night, she wears black *ciré* nylon with a red trim and an emerald green cardigan. Her weekend is a ritual as certain as the Mass she attends every two months. 'By then,' she explains, tongue in cheek, 'I usually have enough sins stored up to make it worthwhile.'

Sheila's father died when she was five and her mother brought up three children on her own, visiting church nine times a week for support. At 15, Sheila left school and had a succession of three housekeeping jobs, each lasting a year. The best involved looking after a family of ten. 'The mother was a teacher,' Sheila chats, smiling as always, 'and she and all the kids would come home for dinner. It was three o'clock before I got washed up.' The salary was £5 a week. The worst was caring for a family of six, half a day off a week, no washing machine and £4.50 in pay. 'I couldn't do it now, all those towels and shirts . . .' At 19, her first job in London as a chamber maid brought her £15; it didn't seem such a bad jump. It was then she discovered the Hibernian.

The Hibernian is one of many Irish clubs in London but it is Sheila's favourite. Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays after church, she visits it, usually alone. 'I like to go to the fil-ims,' she says firmly, giving the word two syllables, 'or come here.'

The Hibernian is tucked away behind Fulham Broadway underground station and ringed by 'Irish' pubs, the King's Head, the White Hart, the White Swan. It is reached via a long tunnel, carpeted with lino tiles and decorated with scenes, looking like blown-up table mats, of rural Ireland. The club itself has a pool room and two dance floors. The main hall resembles a 1930s cinema with the seats removed, all art noveau, geometric lines and red plush. Along the right side of the dance floor is a line of hard-back chairs for ladies on their own; the Sixties and the Seventies haven't touched the place yet. Further to the left, up a step, is a long bar and another horseshoe counter offering tea and coffee, hambergers (sic), sausages on floral plates and cheese and onion sandwiches. A notice says: 'Sorry! No service after the National Anthem.'

A small room upstairs holds a second bar and a smaller area for dancing. A five-man band including an accordianist play a mixture of Irish folk favourites, reels and Reeves. The bar sells Whitehall London and Cork Dry Gin, Paddy Irish Whiskey and small bottles of Lucozade. The latter appears to be largely for the bouncers, a handful of whom hover discreetly around but trouble isn't that frequent. 'When it comes,' says Eamon who works 'full time' three nights a week, 'it's usually the women who cause it.'

Sheila's routine at the Hibernian is inviolate. Three sweet sherries accompanied by her handbag and coat when she arrives at 10.30 p.m. Then she deposits her belongings in the cloakroom and takes up her vigil on a chair on the dance floor. She never goes home before the club closes at 1.30 a.m. She meets, she reckons, on average about ten 'fellows' a year. Sometimes, they're even English. 'Is that bad going?' she asks, inquisitive rather than anxious.

Sheila feels that she has, if not a few skeletons, then certainly a couple of fresh corpses in her cupboard. For example, she says, she has a very nice Irish priest who sometimes takes her for confession. Recently she thinks he may have taken a fancy to her and she certainly has 'stirrings' for him. 'He asked me to go for a drink and he told me he wasn't happy in his calling,' she explains. 'I told him, "Sure, you will be in the priesthood for 50 years and more, you chose the right thing". "If I did," he says to me in the pub, "I wouldn't be here now, would I?"' Her eyebrows go up significantly. She has time to wait to see how *that* develops. Marriage is not a thing that bothers her, it runs late in the family anyway.

Sheila doesn't go to bed with anyone, she says. And she won't until she marries – 'although I've had plenty of requests mind'. If she doesn't have a man, her week is predictable. Monday to Wednesday she stays in, watches television and reads magazines and *True Romance*. Weekends and Thursdays, she spends at the Hibernian. On Sunday, she visits friends. This week it is the home of an Irish singer and his wife. 'She has three children and is expecting her fourth at 28.' Sheila adds with all the fervour she attaches to the catechism. 'I believe in contraception, I really do.'

By 11 o'clock at night, the Hibernian is still almost deserted, the ballroom keeps Irish time. The group plays enthusiastically to an imaginary audience . . . 'Lovely Leitrim' . . . 'The Wicklow Hills' . . . 'England's Motorway' . . . while the pubs begin to turn out. At midnight, the place is full. Dotted around are a surprisingly large number of single women of varying ages. They share the same look of slight *rigor mortis*, staring fixedly ahead, frozen by the company. One woman nips into the Ladies for a slug of whiskey from a quarter bottle. 'I can't be seen drinking,' she explains, 'so I get some help in here.' Sheila needs no help, she feels at home and her natural curiosity rubs out unease.

By one o'clock, however, she has grown anxious. 'Her' man has not turned up. A friend says he has 'business' in the pub close by. The 'business' is drinking after hours. The man is 42, married with six children and Sheila met him nine months ago. She didn't ask if he was married, she says, laughing, because she didn't want to know the answer. But it came out. 'I felt a little less guilty,' she says, 'once he told me he took lots of girls out.' A collective sin, somehow, seems a little less mortal.

'Now we've stopped seeing each other,' she adds, satisfied at the compromise between him, herself and her Maker, 'he just takes me to the bus stop at weekends. Sometimes he kisses me goodnight, sometimes he doesn't. He's asked me to come to his daughter's 21st, if I can find a partner. "Now how am I going to do that?" I told him. Sure, *all* of you are married.' She laughs but she says the number of married men 'on the root' is no joke. A young man in a three-piece suit and a goatee beard cheers her up by asking her to dance. They waltz around the floor, slower than most but with an old world dignity. Not a word is spoken for three melodies. 'Oh no,' says Sheila, 'when I'm dancing, I never speak until they speak. It's not proper to be forward.'

The Anthem, then it's off home to serve – in five hours' time – a full English breakfast and read the *Irish Post*. 'If I'm lucky,' she says, ever optimistic, 'I might even get a lift.'

University Forum will resume on 14 October. Contributions, which need not be confined to higher education subjects, should be marked 'University Forum' and addressed to the Editor, New Statesman, 10 Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ.

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Take A Pew

Any burglar unwisely planning to force an entry by night into my Devon residence, 'Myrtlebank', and later to make off with my plated cheese scoop, my nest of walnut occasionals and my treasured collection of burnt-poker-work mottoes ('Don't Worry, It Won't Happen'), is in for a double shock. The first will be one of disappointment at the low value set in the open market on my derisory portable possessions (to a lady jumble-sale collector who asked me what I did with my old clothes, I politely replied that I folded them neatly at night and put them on again when it was morning). The second shock, and it is a sharper one, will be the discovery of how alert I am and how well prepared for just such a happening, with my counter-measures at the ready.

Securely locked into my bedroom upstairs (it always amazes me to learn how few people, living alone, take this elementary precaution) and hearing a disturbance below, I instantly leap from bed, rattle back the bedroom curtains, switch on both bedroom lights, fling wide the windows and send peeling out into the night the really deafening sound made by the brass handbell which, in my clerical grandfather's house in North Devon, used to call us all, servants included, to morning and evening prayers (the cheerful summons had to reach the furthest corners of the large garden so that the gardener didn't, in the morning, miss the uplift). I understand that the two things that a nocturnal thief dreads most are, apart from shotguns, noise and light. Not realising how deeply the other Appleton inhabitants sleep and therefore how less than nimbly they will fly to my aid, he will be off through the orchard like a lamplighter, shedding my mottoes as he goes ('Be Like The Kettle, Up To Its Neck In Hot Water But Still Keeps Singing').

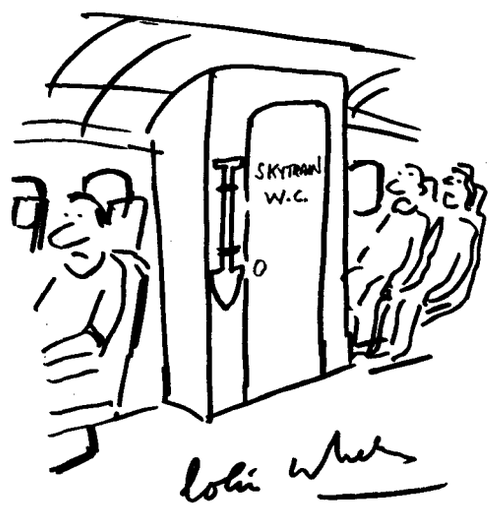
The dangers of exposing children to violence and sex on TV are currently being widely discussed but there is really nothing new in this. In my youth there was, naturally, no television but we were exposed daily to something just as crowded with violent and unsavoury happenings and sexual deplorablenesses. I am referring, of course, to the Old Testament. When everybody, summoned by the bell, was collected together and soberly seated in my grandfather's study, we first plunged forward on to our knees for prayers while my grandmother, through eyes half-open above her folded hands, made sure that everybody was correctly and devoutly at it and praying away like anything. Then, when that was safely over, my grandfather would boom off at us a fiery passage or two from the O.T., pausing here and there to expound or illustrate. Sometimes a door-bell rang, *in mediis rebus*, upon which my mother would jump to her feet and, with a great show of reluctance and self-denial, would hurry out. Her implausible excuse was that she did not want the servants to be disturbed in their devotions but she always broke down badly under any subsequent cross-examination on this point and subsided into giggles.

She was only too right to escape when she could, for what in the meantime was being paraded before us from the good book? Well, wholesale incest to start off with. We'd barely begun on Genesis before Adam's unprincipled son, Seth, begat at the age of 105 a male child most unfortunately called Enos (Enos meant only one thing – a tummy upset and fizzy fruit salts). And begat by whom, may one ask? There was nobody female about but his sisters and even at the age of ten I was aware that that sort of hanky-panky was not to be recommended. I had no sister and so was mercifully free from temptation, but what of the gardener, who was known to have a large sister called Mrs Burnham? He looked innocent enough, sitting there, but were sinful ideas not being put into his head? Enos lived to be 905 and, again making use of extremely close relations (perhaps an aunt or two, for who can tell?), begat several children. And then, before one knew where one was, Noah was filling up that unhygienic ark with members of his family and assorted livestock and one had to try very hard not to think of how perfectly frightful the smells must have been. And after the ark had landed, tremendous inbreeding began all over again. Really very unsatisfactory.

After incest, we passed lightly on, day by day, to almost any other imperfection that you may care to name – rape, murder, torture, slaughter, public stonings, Jezebel reluctantly forming a new brand of tasty dog-food and wily old Onan managing as best he could on his own. My grandfather was a kindly man in many ways who himself lived a life of abstinence and great purity, but perhaps as a result of this he didn't at all mind people getting what was coming to them. There was a chapter which he particularly enjoyed in Deuteronomy when 'the Lord thy God' rattles off a warning list of the physical penalties in this life, and never mind the brimstone later, that can be expected to follow disobedience. There were 57 breath-taking verses and, indeed, 57 varieties of horror, with haemorrhoids and boils (the Egyptian and especially stubborn kind), itches and scabs and mildew and worms in the grapes and locusts all over everything and more boils and more scabs and invasion by a sort of Hitler and, to crown all, cannibalism.

And then, if you please, along came poor old Job, victim of a product-testing survey by the Great Manufacturer, to prove that even if you behaved yourself, you weren't out of the wood yet. There he was, resident in the Land of Uz, wherever that may be, a respected citizen and minding his own business when suddenly his stockbroker announces his portfolio as being valueless, his house is blown down, his sheep struck by lightning, his oxen stolen and his health ruined (boils again) and, the brokers' men having removed the furniture, nothing to perch on but ashes. Most objectionable of all, perhaps, was to be lectured on secret sin by three dreadful friends called Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, troublemakers every one of them.

Though none of this was at all agreeable to listen to so soon after breakfast, it didn't really encourage anybody, by example, to rush out and rape the maids or stone the headmaster. It merely filled a youthful mind with astonishment that such dreadful things could be allowed by somebody so all-powerful, apparently. It was the callous cruelty that sickened one. Needless, too, whatever feeble explanations the holy may trump up. However, the empty and echoing churches of today are there to show that, in the end, even He seems to have got what was coming to Him.



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Letters to the Editor

Johnson's Farewell

Sir, A man is always an expert on the diseases he has suffered from himself, and my specialities are *brucellosis* and *proletariophobia* – otherwise known as Waugh's disease – which like *brucellosis* used only to be found in country areas but now seems to have spread to the suburbs; for Paul Johnson's 'Farewell to the Labour Party' shows all the symptoms. Most of us who work alone feel victims of conspiracies, but it is unusual that such a well-read and versatile writer should see in the Labour Party the future tyrants of Orwell's *1984.*

It baffles me in particular when he says that 'Labour is now the anti-creative party' when it was Jennie Lee who started the state-subsidised culture boom which has progressed relentlessly in spite of economic recession and decline in government expenditure. I am hard pressed to think of any burdens imposed by the Labour Party which disrupt my artist's life: income tax, which I reluctantly concede is a fair exchange for the benefits of free health, education, motorways, etc., was brought in by Pitt and VAT, which is not only onerous but futile because books are zero-rated anyway, was introduced by a Conservative government.

Nor can I see how the shift of power which has undoubtedly taken place in favour of the trades unions, is a 'prelude to further erosions of human freedom'. National Service, under which the whole youth of the nation was conscripted by a 'small group of men manipulating huge collective forces' (the Government) was quite properly abolished. So too were ration cards – not thanks to the Labour Party, perhaps, but thanks to the feelings of ordinary people who in the end are the only tanks that Hugh Scanlon has at his disposal.

The leaders of the large trades unions, whom I can only judge from what I see on television and read in the newspapers, seem good if limited men with good if limited objectives; so far as I know there is no TUC police, nor even any *On the Waterfront* gangsterism. Like carnivals or football matches, picket lines attract hooligans: and if some of these hooligans are the whirling dervishes of the Marxist Left, then all the more reason to support reasonable reformers on the Methodist Left. If there is any lesson to be learnt from history, it is that reform, not reaction, prevents revolution.

It is also true that governments now ask trades unions, in the supposed interests of all, to do what they have never been asked to do before – limit the demands of their members. As a result there has been a decline in the standard of living of trades unionists with minimal industrial disruption – an extraordinary feat of social manoeuvring. Now whether or not this was the right thing to have done, it is quite unreasonable for the community to ask this of union leaders while denying them their only existing means of coercion – the closed shop.

The question of a closed shop among writers and journalists is more delicate still. Most novelists, I believe, would rather starve in a garret with Somerset Maugham's pen in their knapsack, than start at a negotiated union minimum with annual increments over forty years. Writers are not and should not be employees of publishers; thus the need for a trades union as such does not arise. Moreover a good writer, with artistic impatience to create order out of chaos, is not to be trusted with public affairs: a bad one even less. Journalists are not artists, but here too the predicament is different: they are mostly salaried employees, yet the closed shop does give rise to the possibility of an interference in freedom of expression over and above the caprice of editors and proprietors. I do not believe in shooting at shadows, and would in general favour a post-entry closed shop in journalism were it not for Article 10 of the Union's code of conduct which states that 'a journalist shall not originate material which encourages discrimination on grounds of race, colour, creed, gender or sexual orientation'. If he does, he risks fine or expulsion.

This article seems to embody a naive and tendentious moral philosophy which, if properly imposed, would censor much traditional opinion. A Christian, for example – particularly one with a touch of Waugh's disease – could quite properly loathe homosexuals, as God did at the time of Sodom, and want them excluded from professions which have charge over children; he could feel too, like St Paul, that women should be subordinate to men. Even the racial restrictions on reporting are foolish, for the prejudices of an indigenous population – far stronger in other countries than they are in Britain – are among the most persistent if regrettable characteristics of human nature. But who can blame the NUJ for their well-meant folly, when even Parliament in this respect legislates to enforce the perfectability of man?

'What is socialism?' Paul Johnson asks. Like many neologisms – 'corporatism', for example – it means different things to different people. To me it is not the 'grinning triumph of the field-grey regiment' over the individual, but the best political expression of Christian charity – a programme not for the imposition of equality but for the dispensation of justice. There is no doubt in my mind that in spite of our economic decline, this country is a better place to live in than it was a generation ago; and much of the credit for it goes to the Labour Party.

PIERS PAUL READ

Old Bylands Hall
Helmsley
York

Understanding South Africa

Sir, The death of Mr Biko in South Africa, like events at Soweto and Sharpeville, shows what the Afrikaner under stress is capable of. What do you think he would be prepared to do if South Africa were subject to international sanctions or external invasion? Do you think black women and children would be spared? The Afrikaner Nationalist will fight to the finish to keep enough of South Africa under his own racial control, just as the German Nazi tried to do so in 1945. He may lose in the end, yet he will not only go down fighting but take as many 'munts' with him as inhumanly possible. So what is the sense of sanctions, or invasion, except to create another Auschwitz in Southern Africa? Some exiled black politicians may ask for international 'action', but who has ever consulted the majority of the black and coloured peoples there? Do you want a thousand Sharpevilles? If you London pacifists do, what about the ordinary black families in the shanty towns and tribal areas of the Republic? Why not the opposite policy? Instead of an immense loss of blood and treasure in oil sanctions or US/USSR/UN military provocation, urge with offers of less expensive aid an *interim* measure of racial partition in South Africa between Afrikaner and non-white areas; and then try an educational process over a generation to undermine 'white' prejudice and improve 'non-white' example? Why not put the ordinary *people* first for once, and forget about the ravings thousands of miles away in Addis Ababa, Moscow and Havana?

MUSA T. OKORO

Leyton
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Brutality in Northern Ireland

Sir, In his illuminating report from Belfast (NS 23 September) Mervyn Jones reports cases of army and police maltreatment of members of the 'Catholic' community. Readers may be interested to know that recently a Campaign against British Brutality in Ireland was launched in London. Ms Norney (who, as Mervyn Jones mentions, received government compensation for the arbitrary shooting of her son by British troops) was one of the speakers at the Campaign's inaugural meeting. Ms Stewart, whose 11-year-old son was killed by a soldier's plastic bullet, was another. The Campaign decided as its first project to 'adopt' Turf Lodge – the 'Catholic' community where, as Mervyn Jones says, the post-royal-visit action was. The fact-finding group sent over to Turf Lodge by the Campaign heard many horrifying accounts of this 'action' and saw some of its aftermath of scars and damage. We ourselves suffered some harassment, getting both 'lifted' at gun-point, detained and questioned by the RUC for photographing a barracks and held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act for no reason at all.

But this was nothing to what we saw and heard during our 30 odd interviews in Turf Lodge. Mary Graham, 74-year-old pensioner, had been raided by soldiers who had given her no chance to open her door but had just broken in. We saw the damage done to her house. They had stuck a rifle in her mouth. She is still 'a bundle of nerves' and broke into sobs while talking to us. Eileen Morgan, who came to help her, was swung round by the hair. I met the parents of Leo Martin (he is away recovering). We saw horrifying photographs of his body, bruised and scarred all over (and I saw his blood-stained jeans). The photographs revealed he had been struck in the genitals. He was so badly beaten that he was sent to hospital, then promptly removed and beaten up again. Ms Boswell's 10-year-old daughter had been beaten black and blue on the thigh. She herself had had her ribs broken and had stitches in her head. Her 18-year-old son had had the skin torn off his face and neck. A 14-month-old baby had been at the receiving end of a plastic bullet. I saw the hole where Mr McVeigh's ceiling had been knocked in, also his 17-year-old son, still scarred from having his head bashed against a wall by soldiers. William Wright, too, had scars on his forehead and hands from being hit against the floor and trampled on by army boots; and we heard of young girls being forced to take showers in front of soldiers. We saw not only smashed doors, furniture and fittings – the aftermath of army raids – but also troops in action on Sunday afternoon. We watched them raiding and breaking into homes – in one case a group of nuns' house. They broke the door in with their rifles.

After returning to London I have heard from Ms Stewart that 'there has been more trouble in our area, three teenage boys were taken to one of the hallways of the flats and beaten by the Brits. One has a broken ankle . . . another one was stabbed and had to have 22 stitches . . . my son age 11 . . . was pulled and pushed and told he would be brought to Fort Monagh and have his legs broken . . .' And these soldiers are supposed to be 'peace-

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keepers'. Anyone wishing to join the Campaign Against British Brutality in Ireland should write to the address below.

PAT ARROWSMITH

37 Middle Lane
London N8

The Forbidden Subject

Sir, Like Ian Flintoff (Letters, 23 September), I was appalled at the groundless smears against innocent and useful people and activities in Maurice Yaffé's article on paedophilia (NS 16 September). Apart from his insinuations about scoutmasters, youth leaders, teachers and clergymen, Dr Yaffé seemed to think any spanking of children was tantamount to indecent assault and ought to be prosecuted as such.

NEW STATESMAN readers should perhaps remember that it is often those local education authorities which are most heavily dominated by Labour – especially those in the North-East of England – which most firmly support the use of corporal punishment in their schools. There can be no doubt that they have public opinion right behind them, and to suggest that they are encouraging sexual crimes is simply ridiculous.

K. BROWN

44a Wellington Street
Leeds

Education and Equality

Sir, John Rae (Letters, 23 September) doesn't quite complete Peter Wilby's analysis. I can't speak for children at Westminster but I think only a few children in our schools consider that work is either unnecessary or anti-social. Their thinking about work is, however, badly wrong, and it is so because many teachers and society in general distort the thinking of the young. The pupils that worry me most are those who reckon they've worked out precisely how much work is 'necessary' and consider that to do anything 'unnecessary' is a mug's game.

But isn't this the economic lesson of capitalism, of Labour socialism, of the exam system slavishly used, of schooling in general? What we have failed to do in school – with parents as well as with children – is to uphold and sell the idea that learning is itself a good; love of learning and the pursuit of truth, the conviction that our brains can make us masters of ourselves, the recognition that many sorts of hard work are well worth doing for the rewards of the work itself – these are given mere lip service to children once they leave the primary school and what we teachers call 'the real grind' is meant to begin.

It is not just the soft progressives who have done down education. It is 'economic men' who cannot see the flaw in the self-destructive system that we now see collapsing.

MICHAEL TUCKER
Head

Belper School
Derbyshire

In Defence of Thackers

Sir, Whoa, there, as Thackers was given to shouting when someone's enthusiasm ran away with them – can a fellow get a word in? John Bayley's review of *Thackeray: Prodigal Genius* (NS 23 September) contained such a distorted view of my hero that I am dreadfully afraid it might put people off reading that book and so I'd like to correct some of the more blatant errors of fact. It is a struggle not to slip in propaganda on Thackeray's behalf at the same time, but I'll try.

John Bayley implied Thackeray was a complete spendthrift – no mention that more than half of his inheritance was lost in the crash of an Indian bank and that thereafter Thackeray reformed. Bayley says Thackeray died worn out by gluttony when in fact Thackeray was a very sick man for the last ten years of his life, suffering from a stricture of the urethra and a recurrent fever that may have been some kind of typhoid contracted in Italy. Bayley says Thackeray 'didn't give a damn' about society and wasn't interested in political efforts to change it – why then did he spend £850 of his own money standing as an Independent in the Oxford by-election of 1857, and devote time he could ill spare to a carefully thought out manifesto containing a surprising concern for the welfare of the people? And as for not speaking to Dickens again, they shook hands and talked in the Athenaeum not long before Thackeray died.

Doesn't leave much space for refuting the canard that Bayley quotes and therefore may be Carey's – that Thackeray's love for Jane Brookfield was on a par with his love of jam tarts. Thackeray's love for Jane was a deep, sincere, lasting passion which is well documented in his letters to her, now fully available in the Rosenbach Collection in Philadelphia.

Now perhaps I can settle to reading the book.

MARGARET FORSTER

11 Boscastle Rd
London NW5

Fair Deal

Sir, Christopher Price ('A Voice for Parents', 23 September) is quite right in his view that the Taylor Report on School Governing Bodies is a step towards depoliticisation in education at local level. He is, however, quite wrong to state that the Kent Conservatives have decided that those parents who vote Labour are ineligible for co-option.

Obviously in a county council with a 90-percent Tory representation, the composition of the elected members must be reflected in the make-up of the governing bodies. But as an active member of the County Education Committee, I have no knowledge of the political background of any parent governor being queried. In fact we in Kent have voluntarily given up some of our places on governing bodies to allow parents to be represented.

VINCENT B. HUDSON

21 Sandwich Road
Ramsgate, Kent

Kentish Town History

Sir, In your issue of 16 September, V. S. Pritchett, in the review of Gillian Tindall's book, states that the words which suggested the book's title *The Fields Lie Sleeping Underneath* had been written on the lintel of a decaying villa in Kentish Town by 'some crank'.

The crank in question was myself. I don't mind the epithet, but you may be interested to know that my own interest in local history has also borne fruit, though perhaps from a different tree than Ms Tindall's. In fact, the videotape *Song of Long Ago* whose Library première on 26 September marked a modest but significant initiative by Camden Council, was actually shot while my partner and I were living in the decaying villa referred to.

I would hope, therefore, that your readers in the Kentish Town area might make up their own minds on the crank in their manor by visiting Kentish Town Library and enjoying a little living history on videotape.

JOHN HOPKINS

42 Theobald's Road
London WC1

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

James Fenton

Pobblebookle Abblesquabs?

Edward Lear and his World by JOHN LEHMANN *Thames & Hudson* £3.95

We imagine it to be an essentially Victorian phenomenon, the cult of childhood innocence; and when we learn that, of the two great children's writers of the last century, one was a miserably repressed homosexual and the other lost interest in his girl friends after they had reached the age of puberty – that seems to be very Victorian of them as well. But of course the Victorians must have come from somewhere. It cannot be that human nature suddenly, without warning, decided to change; that Victorian morality, Victorian tastes, Victorian complexes all date from 1837. Bowdlerisation, for instance, seems to us a very Victorian vice, but Bowdler (1754-1825) produced his *Family Shakespeare* in 1818, his selections from the Old Testament in 1822, and his Gibbon in the year of his death. Lear was then 13 years old, Carroll was minus seven.

Sentimentality about childhood, the cult of innocence, the children's-book industry are typically 18th-century inventions. The 19th century acquired them second-hand. Those hang-ups, also, are definitely pre-Victorian. Macaulay, who in many ways resembles Carroll and Lear, was born in 1800. *His* problem was that he invested all his love in his younger sisters. When they grew up, got married or died young, he did not lose interest in them, but he lost interest in his own emotional life. He felt that from now on he was inevitably alone. Before that time his letters to his sisters abounded in jokes, bad puns (what Indian city tells the story of *Othello*? Moor-she's-a-bad) and poems written very much in the nonsense spirit:

> Let Quakers howl, let Baptists scowl,
> Let Plymouth Brethren rage.
> We Churchmen gay will wallow today
> In apple sauce, onions and sage.
>
> Ply knife! Ply fork! and draw the cork,
> And have the bottle handy,
> For each slice of goose will introduce
> A thimbleful of brandy.

Afterwards, this gaiety dies out.

An interesting thing about Lear's nonsense is that, although the books were produced for children, Lear wrote nonsense to all his friends, of no matter what age. Sometimes this amounted to nothing more than a distortion of words: 'Do you think,' he wrote to Tennyson, 'there is a Pharmhouse or a Nin somewhere near you, where there would be a big room looking to the North? — so that I could paint in it quietly, & come & see you & Mrs Tennyson promiscuously?' Sometimes, as in this letter to Evelyn Baring, then in his twenties, he goes further:

> Thrippy Pilliwinx, — Inkly tinksy pobble-bookle abblesquabs? Flosky? beebul trimble flosky! Okul scratchabibblebongibo, *viddle squibble tog-a-tog*, ferrymoyassity amsky flamsky ramsky damsky crocklefether squiggs.
>
> Flinkywisty pomm
> Slushypipp.

My italics.

This kind of writing is not to everyone's taste, just as the limericks and nonsense songs, although they went through a score of editions in Lear's lifetime and have probably never been out of print since, are not universally admired. The modern limerick must be a masterpiece of rhyming, with a powerful last line – 'And instead of coming – he went.' Lear's limericks work on a different principle, since for the most part they repeat the first rhyme in the last line. The punch-word, in Lear, is not one of the rhymes, it is the second or third word of the last line, a surprising adjective: 'That *aquatic* old person of Grange', 'That *innocuous* old man of Hong Kong', 'That *ombliferous* . . .', etc. Or a brutal verb:

> There was an Old Man of Whitehaven,
> Who danced a quadrille with a Raven;
> But they said – 'It's absurd to encourage
> this bird!'
> So they *smashed* that Old Man of
> Whitehaven.

The limericks, then, work on different principles from their successors. They should be seen, of course, with the drawings. Lear's nonsense drawings are entirely original; they bear no relation to anything else; their style is unmistakeable, self-consistent, immensely vigorous; they do not develop over the course of his life – the earliest ones are just like the very last of them. Because Lear's journals and letters have never been properly collected and published (why not? one wonders, in an age when scholarship is so desperately looking for things to do), we have probably only seen a small proportion of the total. The originality of *A Book of Nonsense*, according to Vivien Noakes, the author of an excellent biography of Lear which came out in 1968, lay in its complete amorality. Previous children's books, such as *Goody Two-Shoes* or Maria Edgeworth's *Early Lessons*, had usually had some 'improving' purpose. There is nothing improving in Lear; there is no ulterior motive. His words have a take-it-or-leave-it self-assurance. As for the drawings, they possess a kind of charm which one finds in the drawings of young children. Children inevitably lose this charm, when they learn to draw better. Lear managed to retain it all his life.

Lear valued his nonsense highly, and was immensely pleased when Ruskin praised him. 'I really don't know any author', wrote Ruskin, 'to whom I am half so grateful, for my idle self, as Edward Lear. I shall put him first of my hundred authors.' But nonsense occupied only a minor role in his work. His major occupation, after an early success with illustrating works on birds, was topographical drawing. In this, he did have serious problems. He had a natural gift for the picturesque, and the pencil drawings and lithographs from his early years are the sort of thing one sees copied into Victorian scrapbooks. Indeed, it was in this style that he taught Queen Victoria herself to draw. But he was not satisfied with it. He knew, for instance, that he was no good at figures (in some of his watercolours they are absolutely transparent, and they rarely achieve any degree of solidity). So he went back to art school and took lessons. This did not work. Afterwards he fell under the influence of a younger man, Holman Hunt, and decided he must be a pre-Raphaelite. This involved him in all kinds of absurdities, like trying to work up an oil-painting of the quarries at Syracuse on the basis of the landscape near Hastings. He was no good at oils. Hunt seems to have known this, but not to have dissuaded him.

In the end, Lear's poor health, and his epilepsy in particular, forced him away from England. He had to keep travelling, which helped to reduce the epilepsy. And he had to live abroad. It was thus that he produced his finest things, the colour sketches which he later worked up into the watercolours on which he depended for his living. With them, he moved away from the picturesque and some way towards the sublime. Franklin Lushington, the great unconsummated love of his life, called them 'Lear's sermons on texts from Tennyson'.

John Lehmann, in his interesting introduction to Lear's life and work, draws a comparison between the language of the longer nonsense songs and that of Tennyson. There is also a sad parody in one of the later journals:

> He only said, 'I'm very weary,
> The rheumatiz,' he said,
> He said, 'It's awful dull and dreary,
> I think I'll go to bed.'

Lear set four of Tennyson's songs to music, and though they are apparently pretty simple stuff, Tennyson liked them. 'They seem', he said, 'to throw a diaphanous veil over the words – nothing more.'

The format of this book is the same as for the rest of the series, about 20,000 words of text and a good number of well-reproduced illustrations. It is not an original work, but it makes an enjoyable read. Lear's life was terribly sad. After the party that Wilkie Collins gave for Millais on the eve of his marriage to Effie Ruskin, Lear wrote in his diary: 'I feel woundily like a spectator, – all through my life – of what goes on amongst those I know: – very little an actor.' On another occasion he wrote to a friend: 'I am doing little, but dimly walking on along the dusty twilight lane of an incomprehensible life. I wish you were married. I wish I were an egg and was going to be hatched.' One would like to do something for him. One wishes one could reach back through history and grasp his hand and say: 'Cheer up, old man, *we* think the world of you.' But would it do any good? Or would he simply reply, 'Thrippy, Pilliwinx, Inkly tinksy pobblebookle abblesquabs? Flosky? Beebul trimble flosky!'?

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Russell Davies

Ah Well

In the stopping train by DONALD DAVIE *Carcanet* £2
A Portion for Foxes by ANTHONY THWAITE *Oxford* £2.25
Real Estate by MICHAEL HAMBURGER *Carcanet* £2.50 and £1.95
The Hinterland by PETER SCUPHAM *Oxford* £1.95
Tree of Strings by NORMAN MACCAIG *Chatto/Hogarth* £2.25
Implements in their Places by W. S. GRAHAM *Faber* £1.95
The New Divan by EDWIN MORGAN *Carcanet* £3 and £2

A few years ago Anthony Thwaite compiled a booklet on modern British poets that was a masterpiece of tact. Without resorting to slavish blurbery, it managed to cast on everybody the sort of favourable light they might have wished to appear in (and among them were one or two practitioners I had previously thought downright unilluminable). But this encyclopedic enterprise took its toll on Thwaite, and made an elitist of him. He has gone uncomprehensive. Hence his latest volume's oddest item, 'On Consulting *Contemporary Poets of the English Language*', which starts

> Dannie Abse, Douglas Dunn,
> Andrew Waterman, Thom Gunn

and proceeds, via sundry rhythmic hiccups, and felicities like

> . . . a Dorn and then a Knight,
> A Comfort following on a Blight,

to list most of the poets you can think of who have built up a following outside their own family, school, pub, prison-wing or university staircase. So

> What is it, you may ask, that Thwaite's
> Up to in this epic? Yeats'
> Remark in the Cheshire Cheese one night
> With poets so thick they blocked the light:
> 'No one can tell who has talent, if any.
> Only one thing is certain. We are too many.'

Thus the conclusion, and Thwaite never spoke a truer jest. They are many too many, and they are all in print, loudly defying the supposed squeeze on the book trade. Who can trust himself to tell, in this babel, which is the voice raised in passion and which the one that is just shouting the others down? What about the mumblers?

Donald Davie's voice keeps changing, and his gestures also attract attention. *In the stopping train* is just as full of jolts as it sounds, largely because Davie so often leaps out of his reverie to hang desperately on the communication-cord. There are some items in his book, to be sure, which appear to proceed according to plan: a meditation on a photograph of the poet's father, a small essay in rhyming couplets on Henry James (magisterially addressed to 'Americans: for their Bicentennial'), a vote of thanks offered to the memory of the stern Welsh grammarian who once taught Davie French. But other poems here are invaded and overcome by apprehensive clamminess. 'Ars Poetica – In memoriam Michael Ayrton, sculptor' starts spaciously, with a pantheon built of words:

> Walk quietly around in
> A space cleared for the purpose.
>
> Most poems, or the best,
> Describe their own birth, and this
> Is what they are – a space
> Cleared to walk around in.

Even if one believed this, one would be bound to point out that, by the end, the space has shrunk, the walk is over, and Davie is left trapped on his personal Elba.

'To Thom Gunn in Los Altos, California' sets out with a mock- and matey-heroic 'Conquistador! Live dangerously, my Byron', but quickly becomes a long shudder at the Californian coastline, the far edge of the world, looking out over the benumbing indifference of the Pacific. 'What am I doing, I who am scared of edges?', Davie ends by asking. The answer is often: looking scared, and in the same sweaty, domestic way as the late Robert Lowell. It's not just the nearness to the surface here of Davie's family, friends and personal habits, or even the occasional red splash of schizophrenia ('I know who has to be punished: the man going mad inside me'), but the auto-diagnostic impulse, the febrile, pulse-taking fear of self. More sinister, though – because one senses the strain Davie is experiencing in keeping his disgust bottled in images – is 'St Paul's Revisited', a 'sermon' on Depravity, where the bird of rancour

> whoops and whoops it up
> Greek Street and Fleet Street till the gutters run
> Their serial feature. Liquid, yellow, thick,
> It pools here, fed from the Antipodes,
> The Antilles . . . For the seven seas run with bile
> To the Pool of London, sink where the ordure, talent
> At home in this world, gathers.

And suddenly Davie the moralist becomes Davie the unhonoured prophet, and looks not at all at home in this world. It is in the glowering light of passages like this that simpler pieces, say 'A Wistful poem called "Readers" ' (where an imagined pair of dim poetry-fans chat out their snotty exegesis of the previous poem in the collection), take on the glint of paranoia. It all leaves one wondering whether Davie's indignation is now an ingrowing thing, destined to torture him into a last, loud phase as the Angry Old Man.

Thwaite, after this, seems almost serene; not untroubled, of course, but able to cope with his losses. (He has a Larkin-like resignation to help him in this.) As we have seen, his good humour is a sociable impulse rather than, as seems to be currently the case with Davie, an expression of sardonic relief at not feeling god-awful. Thwaite plays in many registers in this book, and only in the deepest does his tone wear thin. Somehow nothing worthy of the title comes of 'The Unnamable'; 'Stereoscope: 1870' falls short of Larkin's comparable exercises (with snapshots and jazz records) in the art of remembering what we never knew. Thwaite's clinchers, too, sometimes fail to grip; an affecting poem called 'Jack' (reminding me of a good poem by Ted Walker where another dead Jack causes tears to flow) comes to a poor end with 'And all that happened sixty years ago'. But the fact that one can identify the odd let-down readily is only an indication of Thwaite's fine instinct for matching textures – not just within a single poem, but in a book. I can't think of another poet who could get away so triumphantly free of the 'showy eclecticism' slur, after presenting poems from the Urdu, pieces called 'Hearing Japanese again', 'Sarajevo', 'For Louis MacNeice' and 'Digging a Saxon Cemetery', along with a doggerel poets'-directory and a mockery of the criticism that bashes This Book with That Book.

It is shameful to be curt with Michael Hamburger, but I feel his *Real Estate* suffers, where Thwaite does not (I am lightly tapping This Book with That Book), from its travels. It is the fairly depressive constancy of Hamburger's personality that is emphasised by the movement, not the variousness of moods and worlds. The phrase 'Ah well' came somewhere in the book, but it could have come everywhere. A possible exception might have been the long philosophical poem 'Travelling', which Hamburger has been working up to this definitive length for some years; but by now, the title-term seems to me to have become overloaded with meanings – and the one that suffers the worst damage is that condition of swishing weightlessness of spirit which I suspect the poet most highly prizes.

Peter Scupham's book is frankly dry. We get a lot of those university twins, architecture and anthropology, and both have a tendency to crumble into archaeology. Scup-

Labour and the Left in the 1930's

BEN PIMLOTT

Why, during the decade of the 1930s which witnessed the Jarrow March and the International Brigade, did the British Left have virtually no influence in political affairs? Ben Pimlott suggests new answers and challenges established myths about left-wing politics in this crucial period. He examines conflicts among groups and factions of the Left and includes the first full assessment of the Socialist League led by Stafford Cripps. There is an important section on the impact on the Left of Keynesian remedies for unemployment and Pimlott also assesses the significance of the Left Book Club and looks at the Constituency Party Movement. Throughout the book a central theme is that the 'expressive' politics of some sections of the Left ironically hindered the achievement of widely-shared goals.

£6.50 net

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ham seems often to be dealing not with life but with still-life, and 18th-century etched still-life at that. There is much scroll and skull. When people appear, it is seemingly at the far end of a Thwaite-type stereoscope – yet is enough to make a difference. 'Answers to Correspondents', in which the Editor of *Girls' Own*, 1881, makes prim reply to petticoated damsels ('You are impertinent, Rose') struck me as the collector's item of the book.

Among the three would-be mad Scots, I was surprised to find myself getting on best with MacCaig. He has an odd way of giving his brain hallucinatory things to do on the surface, while emotion goes on in ground-swells and undercurrents below. When the undercurrents are for any reason cut off, MacCaig is left in mid-air with a silly grin on his face, but this doesn't often happen in *Tree of Strings*, which is a satisfying replica of MacCaig's earth, 'Rolls-Roycing round the sun with its load of gangsters'. Morgan's collection, for me, never recovered from its 100-part title poem. I could make head of this, but not tail. Too much. There are good things in the second half of the book, including two witty exercises in selective typing. W. S. Graham's book is disturbing. Here is a man whom the death of friends hits hard, and who reacts bitterly. His 'Lines on Roger Hilton's watch', raising memories of that painter lying abed with a wash of bottles round him, has some of the best of the desolation in it.

Paul Johnson

With Nobs On

Prophesying Peace *by* JAMES LEES-MILNE
Chatto & Windus £6.50

When James Lees-Milne's earlier selection from his wartime diaries appeared two years ago they were rightly received as a valuable piece of social history. His job, as an employee of the National Trust, was to pronounce upon the historic properties offered to it, and he was thus brought into intimate contact with many curious relics of the *ancien régime*, then in a defensive, not to say desperate, posture. This volume carries the account through 1944 and 1945 (when the author regrettably abandoned his diary) and shows the traditional landed class, and their crumbling houses, if anything in even more disarray. Few believed that the old order could ever be restored, even in part. It was in 1945 that Evelyn Waugh published *Brideshead Revisited* which, as he later revealed, was intended as a romantic requiem to the vanished way of life of the great country houses and their owners. The NT then appeared as a mastodon's graveyard, with Lees-Milne picking out long-tusked specimens. None could foresee the 1970s Duke of Omnium, the coronetted fairground barker, the magnifico's motor museum, the squire's safari park and the cash-registers ringing out like an anvil chorus at Ancestral Abbey.

Mr Lees-Milne chronicles the low-water days of the upper classes with the help of a sharp pair of eyes and ears; and he shines a probing torch into the grander social crannies of blackout London. All this makes excellent and instructive reading. Accustomed as we are to the modern commercial peer, for whom the visitor is always right, we forget the naked snobbery and prejudice of the recent past. Sir Robert Abdy, discussing Elizabethan Montacute, observed: 'We can't possibly let the public inside a house with valuable works of art. They smell.' Lady Beit, informed that Lees-Milne was bringing someone with him, asked: 'Does he eat at our end of the house or the other?' Lady Cunard introduced her guests as follows: 'Princess Kallimachi, who lives at the Ritz; Lady Kemsley, whose husband owns all the newspapers; Mr Peter Hesketh, who owns a whole town; and Mr L.M., head of the National Trust, who looks after all the public houses.' She had, she told the author, snubbed Noël Coward: 'Why do you call me "darling"? I don't know you very well . . . You are a very common man.' Lees-Milne also records a conversation at her house centring on who was 'in society' and who was too 'bourgeois', the protagonists being 'Chips' Channon and his hostess, and ending with her telling Chips: 'You are as much an upstart as K.C., and so am I. We are both from across the Atlantic. As for you [to Lord Margesson] you know nothing about the arts or intellect.' So much for the brilliant wit of 'Emerald' Cunard's table.

The grander nobs emerge with no more credit. The newly-succeeded Duke of Wellington insisted that his son should be addressed by his title. Though short of servants – down to 'the chamberlain's wife and the house carpenter' – he said that 'being a duke and inheriting two houses is like having a glittering present every day'. He was soon sending 'an indignant letter of remonstrance' to the Duke of Devonshire 'because Debo Cavendish, his daughter-in-law, has given her son at his christening the name Morny, a diminutive of one of the Wellesley titles'. Devonshire was told, 'You should have put this duke of only a hundred years creation in his proper place'; at which Lord Londonderry admitted: 'I too am only a peer of mushroom growth.'

Not all the remarks were merely silly. Tom Mitford, later killed in the war, the only brother of those formidable sisters, was 'very rude . . . about Papists, calling them aliens, and saying it was quite out of the question his ever marrying one'. Was the Duke of Norfolk an alien then? 'Certainly.' The Duke of Devonshire added: 'Quite right. Papists owe a divided allegiance. They put God before their country.' Mitford was also violently anti-Semitic, as, it seems, was Lady Binning:

> At the end of tea she disclosed that she was anti-democratic, very pro-German and pro-Nazi . . . The Jews were the root of all evil . . . She could not like Lord Esher, no matter how much I expostulated, because he was a Jew.

Lees-Milne registers these genteel senti-

SPEEDBOAT

RENATA ADLER

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Carol Dix, The Guardian

HAMISH HAMILTON £3.95

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ments disapprovingly. But they are part of his portait, as are the buzz-bombs, and the rising cost of meals at the Ritz. He is not above a bit of prejudice himself, but then it is the essence of a good diary that the writer should not be on his guard. Mr Lees-Milne does his reputation no great harm in thus revealing himself, and he provides readers with a vivid evocation of an edgy period.

Victoria Glendinning

Murry Mints

The Letters and Journals of Katherine Mansfield edited by C. K. STEAD *Allen Lane* £5.75 and *Penguin* 95p

John Middleton Murry was a literary pimp. When his neglected wife Katherine Mansfield died of TB in 1923 at the age of 34, she had published only three volumes of short stories. In the years that followed Murry published practically every word of hers that he could lay his hands on, including her 'Journal' (in fact a collage by Murry of her notebooks, diaries and loose papers) and a 700-page volume of her letters. He greatly enhanced her reputation – without markedly improving his own – and her royalties kept him and his subsequent wives warm until he died in 1957.

Katherine Mansfield loved him dearly (in spite of the odd romantic excursion), but even she saw through him. She wrote to Murry exceedingly briskly about the false, sobbing 'sincerity' of his literary style, which she found 'indecent': 'I feel that you are going to uncover yourself and quiver.' She was hurt by the way he put the *Athenaeum*, which he edited, before her; but she loved him, and they did have some interludes of real happiness together. Mercifully for everyone, the quality of loving is not affected by the quality of the beloved.

Nor can one regret that Murry preserved and published so much of what she wrote. But there is a great deal of it, not all of equal interest, and C. K. Stead's selection from the mass of letters and notebook entries is admirable. His selection is chronological, the letters and notebook-extracts dovetailed so that what she wrote to Murry and others can be compared – and sometimes contrasted – with what she wrote for herself. Professor Stead provides short factual linking passages and a cool, but not dispassionate, introduction.

His selection is guided by a wish to present Katherine Mansfield's writing at its best, rather than to give a balanced biographical portrait. His Katherine Mansfield is brave and witty and unsentimental: 'Her talent was a comic talent', he writes, and 'there was nothing mystical about her that antibiotics could not have cured'. Thus he includes relatively little of her 'sensitive' lyrical writing, and indeed in the context of his selection what there is of it comes across as dangerously near to the 'yearny sentimental writing about a virginia creeper' which Katherine herself deplored in her devoted, maddening companion Ida Baker.

She is an excellent raconteur – in for example her accounts of the hair-raising domestic scenes between D. H. Lawrence and Frieda; Lawrence himself, however, was for her 'the only writer living whom I really profoundly care for'. Her literary judgments are often very funny and completely on target: *Eve's Ransom*, she wrote, like all Gissing's books was 'written with cold wet feet under a wet umbrella', although 'if his feet had been dry and the umbrella furled, it would have been extremely good'. Best of all is this, after re-reading *Howards End*:

> E. M. Forster never gets any further than warming the teapot. He's a rare fine hand at that. Feel this teapot. Is it not beautifully warm? Yes, but there ain't going to be no tea.

This talent for imagery pervades all her vision: she writes about a woman speaking of losing someone in the Navy 'as though it were nothing but a kind of gigantic salt-water laundry'; and about an old woman with 'one *tooth*, a sort of family monument to all the 31 departed ones'. Virginia Woolf thought that all Katherine Mansfield's strength as a writer lay in her senses, in her acute observation of physical detail, of 'tremendous trifles'; she was the only writer Virginia was envious of, which made her assessment somewhat ambivalent.

Katherine for her part envied Virginia Woolf – who was so often prickly, unstable and insecure – for what seemed to Katherine her total security, lapped as she was in Leonard's love and protection. For in the end it all comes back to Murry – even in this volume, in which Professor Stead has, he writes, 'more consistently reproduced the record of Katherine Mansfield's feelings about the books and about her own stories than her feelings about her husband'. Left alone, spitting blood in villas and hotels in France, Italy and Switzerland, struggling with her stories, terrified of dying, she wrote him letters of love and longing. She was greedy for love; sick people can be tiresome; nevertheless, he was abominable. It depressed him to hear about her condition, so 'You must forget these *melancholy, melancholy things*, my own precious darling'. The perfect relationship was easier to believe in during his absence: when, shamed by a revelation of her bitter feelings, he came to spend some time with her, she wrote in a notebook, 'But something is wrong.'

Towards the end she accepted that they could not be always together; in a last desperate search for a cure she joined Gurdjieff's curious Institute for Harmonious Development of Man, in a cold, damp house outside Paris. Here, exalted by the theory but exhausted by the practice of communal harmonious development, she died. She was going to die anyway, and this was better than dying alone in a hotel room; and Murry was with her. The picture of Katherine Mansfield bequeathed by her gossipy literary contemporaries diminishes her; and as for her status as a writer, 'her talent was larger than her actual achievement at the time of her death', as Professor Stead says. No one reading this book can doubt it.

Julian Barnes

Arms & the Man

Jay J. Armes, Investigator by JAY J. ARMES as told to Frederick Nolan *Macdonald & Jane's* £4.95

Jay J. Armes is a rich and successful American private eye whose life has attained what he obviously most desired: the condition of pulp fiction. He has a fleet of expensive cars filled with gadgets; a helicopter; a Red Indian chauffeur-bodyguard; far too many guns; a stockaded El Paso mansion whose grounds contain an 'African village' and a private zoo; a pretty Oriental wife and grotesquely indulged children. He charges a flat $100,000 retainer for really tough cases (or 'capers' as he boyishly calls them); cracks every case he accepts; has an unsentimental way with felons; and regularly escapes death in picturesque ways (when a sniper astride his perimeter wall shot at him with a crossbow, the arrow just missed, and terminally ventilated the miniature white rhino he happened to be petting). In only two respects would the pulp writer fail to predict Armes. First, he is a loyal Southern Baptist who gives 10 per cent of his income to the church; and, secondly, instead of hands he has a pair of steel hooks.

It's fair to say that having his hands blown off by dynamite at the age of 12, and his subsequent response to this, is by far the most interesting thing about Armes; and not just interesting at the personal level, but revealing about the nation of over-achievers to which he belongs. An English kid who suffered as Armes did, one feels, would aim for acceptance, for normality; would end up writing a book called *How I Learned to Live With my Handicap*, filled with appendices about disability grants and DHSS benefits, and illustrated with pictures of cleverly-woven baskets and talented water-colours. Armes's book is illustrated with photos of him doing press-ups on his hooks (he starts the day with 1,800 of them) and pounding a punch-bag; he owns a pair of cosmetic hands, but keeps them only for 'dress' wear and disguise. It is meant to make you wince, and does so, though largely because it represents the power of positive thinking gone beserk. Armes has not only come to terms with his hooks ('I decided that maybe losing my hands was in the Lord's plan for my life'), but so overcompensated that he puts them up front all the time. He changed his name from Armas to Armes: he delights in using his nippers as wirecutters, magnets, glasscutters; he smashes through doors with them, snaps steel chains, pulls documents out of fires there is even a .22 magnum built into his right prosthesis, and he pulls the trigger with a twitch of the bicep. Throughout, he refers to his appendages with an engaging but appalling heartiness:

> I hit him with a right hook, and I do mean hook. He fell back, his mouth a sudden mess of bloody flesh; then he lurched at me

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again. I hit him once more, and he reeled back out of sight, making a broken, coughing sound.

There is, as you might have gathered, a swaggering unpleasantness about Mr Armes. It is, doubtless, a little prissy to look for a highly developed moral sense in such a man. He prefers his justice rough – the rougher the better – and doles it out with casual arrogance to all who cross his path. Once, when he first started keeping wild animals in the back garden of his own house, neighbours complained about the noise made by his baby elephant and pack of lions. Armes thought them short-sighted – after all, the elephant would be quieter when it grew up – and refused to budge; whereupon one intolerant neighbour poisoned his elephant with strychnine. Armes considered retaliation in kind; instead, after much reflection, he simply bought up all the adjacent houses, bulldozed them to the ground – 'People were appalled. I didn't care' – and extended his zoo (installing, among other things, tapes of mockingbirds up in the trees). 'My way', he comments, 'was – I hope – a little more constructive.' It's a bit like saying that if God fixes for you to have your hands blown off, and you subsequently become an illustrious shamus, then God has acted constructively. But then it wouldn't be at all surprising if Mr Armes believes that too.

Corinna Adam

God's Schoolgirl

Audacity to Believe by SHEILA CASSIDY *Collins* £4.50

On her last day in jail in Santiago de Chile, the Catholic doctor Sheila Cassidy was told by a fellow-inmate that their acquaintance had made the Chilean woman – a committed revolutionary – change her opinion of Catholics. Oh dear, one thinks, how very predictable. How very self-approving of the British doctor, soon to be safe thousands of miles away. But no: the Chilean woman was saying that she had changed her opinion of Catholics *for the worse*. She refused to accept Dr Cassidy's decision not to publish an account of her experiences under the junta; she regarded the decision as motivated not by modesty or caution but by cowardice. After considerable heart-searching Dr Cassidy agreed, and this book is the result.

Some of the more sensational chapters, dealing with Dr Cassidy's surreptitious treatment of a wounded revolutionary, her arrest, interrogation and torture, have been serialised in the *Observer*. There is a dreadful sameishness about such accounts: evil *is* banal. Even so, and certainly in the book as a whole, Sheila Cassidy's story is different. Few people actually boast about such experiences, but she approaches them with exceptional humility. The only person ever rebuked or criticised is the author herself: and the self-searching is done in the manner of an absorbed adolescent hunting for new venial sins, rather than with the resigned self-knowledge one might expect from a highly-trained, middle-aged woman. Because that is how Sheila Cassidy appeared to the world, even if she was only a child in the sight of God. A wayward child, still resisting at 37 a call she heard at 16. 'At first I thought that I or God had made a mistake, but the weeks turned into months and I knew that there was no mistake, and once again I was afraid and distressed.' It comes as no surprise that her favourite poem is 'The Hound of Heaven'.

Not the least touching part of a brave and gentle book is the description of the life the women made for themselves in Los Alamos jail. They arrived there sorrowing, brutalised and often ashamed – few people resist torture completely – and were adopted into a strict but homey sisterhood, a communality of sandals, hairgrips, shared sweets and scraps of love-songs. Dr Cassidy remembers minutiae, like a Chilean girl finding a blanket for an old woman she had just been quarrelling with, or her own continuing embarrassment in the communal showers. Gradually, these details coalesced and solved her personal dilemma: she managed to renounce the world and adopt her vocation. At the same time, she solved a problem which – since she began, and to an extent has remained, apolitical – bothered her less than most: how to reconcile what she believed with what her Marxist comrades believed. The answer lay, as it so often seems to do in Latin America, in the concept of martyrdom. Both Christian and Marxist, she writes, 'have answered the call of that Greater Love whereby a man is granted the strength to lay down his life for his friends'. A simple view of life, perhaps – blessedly simple.

Philip French

Hell on Wheels

Hear that Lonesome Whistle Blow by DEE BROWN *Chatto & Windus* £5.95

After years of writing orthodox regional history and Western fiction, Dee Brown achieved late fame some six years ago with *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*. This eloquent account of America's western development between 1860 and 1890 as seen from the Indian point of view hit millions of his masochistic fellow countrymen where they wanted to be hurt, as well as appealing to a nexus of attitudes about the environment, the counter-culture, neo-colonialism and the Vietnam War. The book's message was that social progress, white culture, politicians and businessmen were hypocritical, corrupt and death-dealing. Fundamentally a polemical work, *Wounded Knee*'s inherent sentimentality left the reader free to shed a tear, shrug a shoulder

This Week's Silly Best Sellers

1. **The Shell Guide to Dead Animals on the Motorway**
2. **Insomnia and How to Handle It** – R. Maudling
3. **I Climbed All Over the World's Ten Craggiest Men** – Alistair Cooke
4. **Wagner for the Tone-Deaf** – B. Levin
5. **The Mugas: A Third Attempt** – J. Fowles
6. **Country Diary of an Edwardian Voyeur** – P. Gumby
7. **The Still Only No. 7 But Very Hopeful Book**
8. **The Guinness Book of Right Wingers**
9. **Europe on £100,000 a Year** – Roy Jenkins
10. **The Joy of Signing Autographs** – E. Heath

also selling fairly well

MONTY PYTHON AND THE HOLY GRAIL (BOOK)
£3.50 (Eyre Methuen)
Mønti Pythøn lk den Hølie Gräilen (Bøk)
Kr. 29.50 (in U.K. only)

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and walk away. But Brown did at least place the Indian at the centre of an epic tragedy.

His new book is concerned with an aspect of the same epic period that is less amenable to such simple-minded polemics – the completion of the five transcontinental railroads between the Mississippi and the Pacific. His publishers call it 'the story of the great American railroads'; it is in fact the case *against* the great American railroads. The outlines of this story are familiar enough and Brown tells it passably well within the limits of the muckraking tradition.

Put pretty crudely, and that's more or less the way Brown puts it, groups of unscrupulous robber barons got together in the east and west to make fortunes out of railways that nobody needed. They got immense government subsidies and tracts of free land from corrupted legislatures, created a complicated series of interlocking companies to shake down investors, taxpayers and each other, and exploited cheap immigrant labour. As a consequence the Indians were dispossessed, the buffalo destroyed, the ecology ruined, millions of immigrants lured from Europe to cultivate unsuitable land, and the nation presented with miles of poorly built railroads and a hopeless communications system that had to be bailed out time and again by the government. The mobile communities of brothels, saloons and gambling dens that accompanied the construction gangs across the west were dubbed 'hells on wheels'; Brown's remorseless indictment almost proposes such a city as an image of American history. Though he takes time out for a few bland chapters on foreign travellers' experiences crossing the Continent and names a few token 'good railwaymen' (among them the British restaurateur Fred Harvey), he moves inexorably towards his final pages, where he extols the anti-railroad National Grange organisation which sprang up among western farmers in the 1880s and the Populist movement that followed it.

It is characteristic of Brown's approach that Lincoln and Brigham Young figure in his saga principally through close-ups of their hands trapped in the till, and that he should elevate to emblematic significance the fact that the unscrupulous financier Thomas Durant (boss of the Union Pacific) through inexperience or excess of champagne twice failed to hit the final golden spike at Promontory Point, Utah, on 9 May 1869. Such things should not be overlooked, yet the constant emphasis on shoddy deeds serves not merely to qualify almost out of existence the epic nature of the undertaking, but to deny a true complexity to the events and a full humanity to the participants. This reductive process also takes away from the abiding heroism of the men who physically laid the tracks and ran the trains, leaving them as hapless victims. Above all, despite the contemporary quotations, Brown fails to create the atmosphere of the post-Civil War 'Gilded Age', or to capture the magic of the railways – not that romantic side which has such nostalgic appeal for us now, but rather the way in which the steam train frightened and excited the world, and transformed the way we think about space and time.

Perhaps, as a corrective to pre-war Westerns like *Union Pacific* or old-fashioned school histories, Brown's book has its uses. An understanding of American 19th-century history is impossible without appreciating the pervasive corruption and the railroad companies' contribution to it. Some quite reputable historians tend too easily to excuse these evils. To make them the central issue, on the other hand, is to abuse history and forge a false link to the past. Politically this cuts both ways. Brown's flabby Populist notions are manifest, and everything is gauged to make readers connect Watergate with such celebrated railway scandals as the Credit Mobilier affair of the 1870s. Yet the fastest-selling non-fiction book in America at this moment carries the aggressive title *It Didn't Start With Watergate*, is by the ultra-right-wing journalist Victor Lasky, and seeks to reassure Nixon supporters that their man was no more dishonest than the various Democratic presidents he succeeded.

Tom Paulin

Bastardly

Evidence of Love by SHIRLEY ANN GRAU *Hamish Hamilton* £3.95
The Paris Trap by JOSEPH HONE *Secker & Warburg* £4.50
The Yellow Streak by BRUCE MARSHALL *Constable* £4.50

'Au-dessous de ses beaux yeux bleus, il n'y avait rien de tout' was how one of his mistresses described Marshal Pétain. Shirley Ann Grau's ambitious family chronicle is a bit like that. A young man gazes into the blue eyes of his girl, and then 'the whole world ran to me and gathered in me. I grew and grew and filled the universe. Until there was nothing beyond me. Just empty space.' Listening to Beethoven, he says: 'My mind sparkled with the brilliant emptiness of a winter night. I shivered in my icy clarity.'

All the characters are similarly empty. A woman describes her reactions to the funeral of her clergyman husband:

> The movements of mourning were so familiar to me, they lacked all emotional content, all meaning. I knew them so well, I was an actor in a long-familiar role.
>
> As if with each of his many funeral services I had buried a bit of Stephen. Like Mithridates and his daily sip of poison, I had immunised myself.

What we are witnessing here is not a woman's failure to grieve, but the sort of feint which a knowing author can employ in order to conceal her inability, or unwillingness, to present difficult emotions.

And although *Evidence of Love* is capably written, it operates in a deeper void than Joseph Hone's *The Paris Trap*. Hone's nonentities are at least lusty and sentimental, but Shirley Ann Grau's characters, for all their ability to 'smell the chilly ozone of eternity', feel absolutely nothing. The interiors they occupy are presented sharply and curiously, and the atmosphere of Mittel Europa before the first world war (soldiers in *okapis* marching silently through the cobbled streets of Belgrade) is impressively rendered. There are hissing gas-lights, porcelain basins and linen parlour-maids – all the furniture of the past is in place – but as an examination of 'carnal love and sublimated love, self-love and love transcendent', the story reveals only an obsession with blue eyes and vacant spaces.

Above the empty desert round Riyadh airport a VC10 explodes. Remember those photographs in the colour supplements? Remember Bridget Rose Dugdale, Carlos Ramirez, Inspector Clouseau of the Sureté, and every daft spy thriller you've ever read or watched? They're all there, and more, in Joseph Hone's extraordinary imploding fantasy. One of the characters, a Parisian *couturière* called Katinka, is 'like a lot of old film clips put together – a bloody documentary on 20th-century Europe intercut with some fictional extravagance set in Ruritania'. Her lover, who is a spy with an office in a rainy part of Holborn ('Why is rain always sexy?' he inquires), has given up writing spy stories for the sake of what his ex-wife oddly terms 'cock-ups down back alleys with the lights off in Cairo'.

Way back in the late Sixties, they 'lived so well . . . we didn't even need the Sunday papers'. But their marriage has 'exploded' for the lack of 'something years before, some mild ghost not laid in bed then'. Now, disillusioned over his calamari in expensive Soho restaurants, Harry prefers the 'sweet charm of illicit, brief meetings' with Katinka. They avoid 'the too familiar' with its 'nail clippings on the lavatory seat', and instead engage in what's described as 'the only truly successful relationship' – a quick lay between flights.

Rejecting a possible holiday in the safely familiar world of 'Dorset, Sidmouth, Thomas Hardy', Harry gets himself kidnapped in Paris by Anna Kalin. She, too, is 'a series of short, violent film clips', and although she's left 'a trail of burnt embassies, banks, supermarkets and smart boutiques behind her', she's OK really: 'She wasn't a bastard, I thought, but simply a woman who knew every by-way, every fraud and trap, in a bastard world.' She smells of cognac and her cheek is 'terribly velvet'. Mr Hone manipulates his clichés with such confidence that he can even insult an inoffensive minor character for talking 'like someone in a bad spy movie'. In his world hell is an infinite spiral of self-parody, and imagination just another term for decaying celluloid.

Clerical comedies are invariably twee. *The Yellow Streak* is a rougher jest altogether. It's set in Scotland and reads rather as if a group of Anglican characters from one of Barbara Pym's novels have been transported into the rawer pastures of Scottish episcopalianism. There, the devil makes young girls discuss the colour of their pubic hair in confirmation classes, and the Reverend Wardie marries the pregnant daughter of a sex maniac 'who had been sentenced to death for murdering a policeman while resisting arrest when caught raping a girl on the beach at Lossiemouth'.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

John Coleman

Here's Sand in Your Face

Pumping Iron (A) *Studio Two; ABCs Bayswater and Fulham Road*
Annie Hall (AA) *The Gate; Cinecenta; Odeon, Swiss Cottage; Screen on the Green*
A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (AA) *Academy One*
Outlaw Blues (AA) *Warner West End 3; ABCs Bayswater and Fulham Road*
Pelvis (X) *Soho Cinema; Studio One: Jacey, Trafalgar Square*
Young Lady Chatterley (X) *Classic Moulin; ABCs Edgware and Fulham Roads*

Arnold Schwarzenegger may sound like something out of *Mad* magazine and, as I go on to quote his vital statistics ('chest, 57" – waist, 31",' etc.), is bound to, but he is actually a very engaging Austrian, currently resident in Santa Monica. He is a body-builder, the champ in fact until he abdicated, with that other vital difference: a sense of humour. Directed by George Butler and Robert Fiore, *Pumping Iron* is a semi-documentary or 'faction' constructed around this hulk, this physical chunk, this muscular monstrosity – and it is great fun. Schwarzenegger makes it so because he has a mind above the rippling beefcake. He also don't care what he say, not he: 'I'm getting the feeling of coming . . . so I'm coming day and night . . . so I'm in heaven.' And he breaks into a big, genuine grin of self-admiration. This from the film, and he was talking about the terrible preparations, the smashing through the pain barrier of weight-lifting and gym work of horrendous kinds. In life, which he shows every appearance of enjoying, he is unfrightening and not quite so large, clothed, as one anticipated. Like Ali, he is a phenomenon; and I allow myself the indulgence once again of reviewing the man as much as the movie. When asked, he gave sane, grave answers to the questions he had obviously heard a thousand times before: on narcissism, racialism (the central competition took place in Pretoria, a black came second to Arnold and Arnold said he suspected the South Africans wouldn't have minded a bit if he had come first), the Fire Island or gay image of gentlemen who so steadily devote themselves to themselves. He reckoned the percentage of homosexuals would be in line with the national average anywhere.

You may have seen this Schwarzenegger in a crazy Bob Rafelson film called *Stay Hungry*. In *Pumping Iron*, he acts too, but in a wholesome, beaming, saving way. Frankly, the other body-builders register as thick or sick or silly, as dumb as male Miss Worlds. Arnold is displayed psyching his opponents out of their over-developed deltoids. For this very strange occasion incorporates such flexing numbers as Louis Ferrigno, Franco Columbu and Mike Katz. It is deaf Louis, with a damn near mad dad promoting him beyond endurance, who could just snatch a title in 1975 from Arnold. To watch the outcome, which is never really in doubt, is painful. What is, finally, so odd about this visual account of making muscle is that the oiled, turning, posturing torsos are so physically repellent – at least, from where I sat. Bulges of biceps, swollen veins like things about to burst, male mammaries to rival Monroe's or Mansfield's: who needs them? Clearly, some chaps do and not merely those who had sand kicked in their faces at an awkward moment of adolescence: there are girls and boys who will pay money to look at the grotesque results of tampering with a physique. If this absorbing film doesn't respond to a question, it surely poses one.

To turn to Woody Allen – or should it be Weedy? – is almost too neat. This fledgling shortie with a tongue dipped in his own cheek and out again, the ur-Jewish New Yorker, the comic who read Freud and wondered why, stands in for many of my hopes and fears: this is not his fault but I applaud him for it. *Annie Hall*, which I wrote about at enthusiastic length in August (when it was about to open the Edinburgh Film Festival), is a sad, special celebration: it could as easily have been titled The End of an Affair. This is dangerous ground, but for the eponymous lady – played with a gauche winsomeness I find enormously attractive by Diane Keaton – it seems reasonable to read Diane Keaton. She has partnered Mr Allen in films and life: now we have her trying to do the impossible – combine the two.

Woody, fluffy-haired and arrested-gestured, does his hesitant, gently vicious one-liners – after sex, for instance: 'That was real nice' (the lady), 'As Balzac said, there goes another novel' (he), or, describing it elsewhere, 'the most fun I've had without laughing'. He goes under no particular disguise as Alvy Singer, a humorous writer and nervous stand-up comedian. Annie Hall (Miss Keaton) is a kooky would-be singer who becomes a real one under his erratic tutelage. The film is a sort of album, or series of pasted-in valentines: it uses clips from TV shows, has more address to the camera than one would have thought wise (but it is), throws subtitles under a false-amorous dialogue to disclose what Annie and Alvy are truly thinking. It is a thoroughly risky undertaking about botched love, played by the original participants: and it works.

Joseph Strick was, a while ago, brave enough to attempt a film of Joyce's *Ulysses*. Opinions varied on this, including my own, but on the whole I was for it. Anyone that temerarious gets marks for trying and, my gods, I have seen worse bloomovies. *The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* was a formative book for me, much more so than *Ulysses*: I lean towards the conventional. So, mercifully, does Mr Strick in his version of James Joyce's first novel. Some episodes and encounters are brought off superbly, notably the Xmas dinner where Parnell's fate comes up with the turkey. T. P. McKenna – Buck Mulligan in Strick's earlier Joyce – is quite splendid as Dedalus *père* and the direly articulate part of Stephen is done with the correct strong timidity by one Bosco Hogan, a fellow who changes character whenever he manipulates his spectacles. Of course, it is too strong to expect him to deliver the great-on-the-page speeches while seen walking by the sea or whatever. But 'silence, exile, and cunning' still hums into attention, even off the screen (which is very well served by Stuart Hetherington's use of Irish locations). The employment of the Voice Beautiful, Sir John Gielgud, one would account a mistake: he does the hellfire sermon and Mr Strick permits himself some intercut images that the words ought to have taken care of. But respectful, respectable, and – here and there – worthy of astounding respect, this *Portrait* is. Why bother is something else again.

Outlaw Blues is a colossally with-it, into-it, up-to-the-minute entertainment, anent a folksy song-writer and singer, Peter Fonda, fresh out of jail, whom the world takes to against the fuzz. *Bonnie and Clyde* screws *Nashville*. A super lady, Susan Saint James, figures. *Pelvis* has nothing to do with the late and over-lamented E.P., being about a guitar-strumming lad who makes the big time more conventionally: it is half-way humorous and makes an effort to be sexy with a difference. *Young Lady Chatterley*: to be honest, I'm puzzled. This is a quarter-way humorous and has a very pretty American leading lady, with make-up (as Chaucer might have said) by Mary Queynt. But was it made in Australia, or just for them?

Radio

Eric Korn

Proper Channels

I've been pondering the Big Ones, the Darling Questions: Whither Sound? What are reviewers for? Are the four programmes as immutable as the Four Elements? How will the re-routing of the Archer Omnibus affect my Sunday mornings? Mostly I review programmes, not radio, fussily trying simultaneously to conduct a dialogue with producers and writers, to condole or congratulate listeners, and to admonish absentees. (Write out 100 times: 'I must not say, "Don't Miss This" '). Trying instead to monitor programming is salutary, if strenuous. Can the fish inspector stand back far enough to sniff the river? I'm led to these grand perspectives by press conferences held by the Controllers of Radios 3 and 4, Stephen Hearst and Ian McIntyre. Both are practical

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visionaries, unflinching optimists; better still, they recognise each other's existence.

Radio 3 is cramped between the Open University and a compulsory, cheeseparing 11.30 p.m. closedown, particularly confining since after ten o'clock viewers become listeners. One big concert (its obligations to music are statutory) and there are only fagends of evening left. Despite which, there are two major new series. *Many Reasons Why*, an ambitious analysis of 30 years of *Vietnam, with the participation of almost* everybody, promises well. The first episode was quietly enthralling; Archimedes Patti of OSS admitted to virtually inventing Ho Chi Minh. Following Roosevelt's posthumous anti-colonial directives, he kept the French on ice in Kunming, while giving Ho the official allied stamp of approval. 'I was somewhat naïve at that moment in time,' he confessed, disingenuously describing a flypast by US fighters while the flag was unfurling as 'a trick of fate, one of those things that happen once every million years'. You needn't be hot on historical inevitability to doubt it. Commending the programme, Stephen Hearst called Britons Greeks to the US's Roman Empire, a faded notion that puts the rest of the world firmly in its place. Is Radio 3 Greek to Radio 4's Roman? Is Radio Greek to TV's Roman? *The Long Search Continues* is the A-level companion to television's polytheistic Pilgrim's Progress, *The Long Search*; yet the first step, with its gurus materialising candy, flowers, and more spiritual benefits ('95 per cent of my jealousy has gone') on their disciples was fascinating but not exacting: picturesque, an inappropriate word for radio.

Radio 4 has more lebensraum, though it's timing is constrained – until Radio Scotland devolves to 1500 metres – by regional programmes sliding in and out of schedule. Still McIntyre is trying to restructure with more flexible programme length and tighter programme content. An immediate and striking consequence is the proliferation of short programmes, admirable if it does not just mean a weedy hypertrophy of signature tunes. There have been unjust complaints: five minutes convey about 1,000 words, longer than this column, and 20 minutes is longer than a Johnson valedictory. Anthony Thwaite's *Words* (Radio 3) is a perfect essay length at 5 minutes; 15 is all Derek Robinson (*Mosaics*, Radio 4) needs to fillet and gut a town with anatomical precision; and Patric Dickinson's *Time for Verse* is exactly balanced at 10 minutes, part of the exhilarating blossoming of poetry programmes of all lengths and genres on R3 and R4.

Both Controllers show a proper but not obsessional concern for listening figures. But a programme's personality is a curiously factitious entity. Hearst spoke of listeners imprinting like Lorenz's goslings on some misapprehended stereotype – thus BBC-2 is a minority choice, as though it were still all Sophocles and Structuralism; McIntyre mentioned the 'inheritance factor', which is the listeners' laziness or loyalty. The desire to build an audience is wholesome; the urge to hang on to it may not be. This philosophy underlies all those programmes whose names suggest that they are indispensable to the normal processes of chronology; *Start the Week* with Richard Baker, *Stop the Week* with Robert Robinson: the week would surely start and stop without them.

It's only technological accident, mimicry of the world of newspapers and magazines, that produced discrete channels. If there had been push-button tuning in the Twenties it might never have begun. Consider the influence that Ceefax will eventually have on viewing habits, as people learn to choose between a multitude of stored programmes; the idea of radio channels as competing escort agencies is plainly transient: sooner or later the whole repertoire of music and drama will be simultaneously available. Now they try needlessly to cater to the whole man: last week no one told listeners to Radio 3's *Science Now* that it was immediately followed by Radio 4's *Scientifically Speaking*; they'd had their science and must round their culture with *Kaleidoscope*.

The new schedules, then, sound promising, and time will tell how their components sound; meanwhile how shall I rebuild my disrupted Sunday, long regulated by the need to hear Alistair Cook and avoid Walter Gabriel, with *Letter from America* shifted to lunchtime, *Morning Service* at 9.30, and that hour of rustic didactic comonplaces in the evening? I have been boggling all week at the calculation that by now *The Archers* have amassed some 18 million words, 25 times the length of the Bible, and so becomes the largest single imaginative creation of the human species, the only cultural artefact visible from outer space.

Television

Martin Amis

Punchbags

Now that more than a week has gone by without a *Pilger Report* (ATV), I'm seriously starting to consider going out of doors again fairly soon. Not very soon, perhaps, but soon. Or perhaps not. Perhaps, on the whole, it would be safer if I . . . You see, Pilger once made a film about pollution; I watched it, and then duly resigned myself to a lifetime regime of gasmasks and boiled Malvern Water. More recently, Pilger made a film about the Conspiracy Laws; for months I snubbed my postman's good mornings in case I got arrested, flogged, sent to prison for ever, and so on. Only the other week, Pilger made a film about the Health Service; I broke a toe shortly afterwards, but didn't dare go to hospital for fear the surgeons would goof and sew up a live baboon between my shoulder-blades . . .

Or perhaps I take Pilger too literally. In the final instalment of his latest series of backhanders, Pilger made a film about nuclear power; and, as is the way with Pilger, everything turned out to be as bad as it possibly could be – or not quite: because everything is soon going to get much worse (and never ever get better again). By 1980, 36 countries will have nuclear power, including such volatile climes as Zaire. Pilger spoke of plutonium, the regularity with which it 'disappears', and the ease with which it can be used for terrorist purposes. There is bound to be a nuclear war directly. Don't eat fish from the Irish Sea: it is already contaminated and will bugger you up. Plutonium is notoriously unstable: not long ago, we 'almost lost Detroit'. In addition, it gives everyone cancer.

Pilger took us to Hiroshima, 'not to trick your emotions' but to show us the 'first human participants' in the nuclear experiment. You can imagine the kind of non-emotive material he gathered there: 'My skin was melting . . . My whole body was covered in pus . . . My face was swelling, so big I couldn't see . . .' The programme wasn't all about mushroom clouds, but it might as well have been. The trouble with Pilger is that he is more interested in good copy than he is in good causes. His films are so heavily loaded, so clearly sentimental in the literary-critical sense, that you would have to be a punchbag of paranoia to take any notice of him whatever. This doesn't necessarily make him immoral (nor hard to watch – his shows have plenty of vulgar appeal), but it certainly makes him ineffective.

The attic, or maybe the scullery, of Pam Ayres might not be such an uncongenial place: *The World of Pam Ayres* (LWT), however, fills one with a queasy eschatological dread. Much of Miss Ayres's appeal, I suspect, derives from the obviously grave limitations of her talent. Her singing voice is bland, pleasant, functional; she isn't built to dance though of course she 'has a go' at it; and her poems are not only no good but self-approvingly amateurish even by the standards of the lightest light verse. The audience seems to respond to this pleasingly democratic allotment of ability – and they naturally explode whenever Miss Ayres mentions anything that might conceivably be connected with sex, which she frequently does (you feel, though, that poor Pam wouldn't be any luckier with that either, the funny little moo). Her 40-tooth postbox grin and honkingly bucolic delivery ('the farkree oo-urr every moorrn', etc) help to emphasise the vulnerable modesty of her pretensions, so much so that you almost applaud her for daring to go on television at all. This may be a portent: the age o the talentless-scout nears.

On Monday's *Tonight* (BBC-1) Angela Rippon predicted that Enoch Powell would shortly be 'facing up to Ludovic Kennedy' Oh really? Ludo began with an attempt to identify Enoch with the NF – why, they shared certain basic beliefs, didn't they' 'Yes,' said Enoch patiently, 'and Hitler said that two and two made four.' Ludo's genera ralised hostility grew. 'I gather you believ in majority rule,' he said pitilessly. 'Don' we all?' said Enoch. 'In *Rhodesia*?' pounced Ludo. 'I've always said so,' said Enoch ' . . . Turning now to foreign aid,' sai Ludo. When will they learn that Enoch i the opposite of a pushover, that every in competently compassionate assault on hir will only win him more support, that yo do not defeat an extremist (on televisior merely by being right?

Tom Stoppard's first full-length T drama, *Professional Foul* (BBC-2), continue his much-heralded quest for political cor tent and his spurning of the frictionle vivacity of his earlier plays. Such policy forming always strikes me as a little otiose

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don't writers simply write the next thing that's there for them to write? But – anyway – Stoppard showed such humorous elan that the 'big ideas' of his new play never resembled the marooned topicalities which his co-practitioners deal in. A characteristic three-tier exposition on civil rights, abstract philosophy and football, *Professional Foul* is the sort of play that merits either several thousand words of commentary or a paragraph of bemused and grateful praise. Here is a paragraph of bemused and grateful praise.

Stoppard's football match, by the way, was a World Cup qualifier between Czechoslovakia and England. The real-life World Cup qualifier that night was of course disputed by Czechoslovakia and Scotland, and it is with the Scots that our loyalties will perforce lie when Argentina looms. The Scots displayed many curious techniques seldom seen in equivalent English fixtures. For instance, they score what I believe are known as 'goals' by driving the ball *between* the opponents' 'goalposts', thereby accumulating 'points' which in turn empower the team to 'go through' to the next 'round'. It makes a heartening change from that great, uncompleted spectacular ('I thought the lads were quite unlucky in the second half, Brian'), otherwise known as *The Nervous Breakdown of Don Revie.*

Football

Brian Glanville

A Long Goodbye

My Life and the Beautiful Game by PELÉ with Robert Fish *NEL* £3.95

There is surely a case for our irreducible public figures to refrain from autobiography – lest they thereby be reduced: Chaplin with his stick and bowler and moustache, his sublime plasticity, Pelé with his spectacular resilience, his marvellous invention. Reading Chaplin, we discover that he thinks 'lambent' to mean skipping like a lamb, and confront the horrid snobbery of his first return to England, looking for the aristocracy and ending up with Sir Philip Sassoon. Pelé's collaborator has made bad worse, which was perhaps to be anticipated. He is, one gathers, 'a writer of mystery stories . . . lived for ten years in Brazil and speaks fluent Portuguese'. No doubt. What he knows nothing at all about is, precisely, Pelé's 'beautiful game'. Solecism abounds. Embarrassment runs rampant. The word 'shoot' never appears; every goal is 'kicked'. Training camps are 'concentrations', own goals 'self goals', full-backs 'lateral defenders', an offending player is 'sent from the game', a free kick in the 1966 World Cup Final becomes 'a penalty kick', the bar becomes 'the crosspiece'. There is much clumsily literal translation from the Portuguese that Mr Fish speaks fluently. Even the four verses with which Pelé prefaces the book have 'I am leading he . . . but following he', which makes one speculate on the fluency of Mr Fish's English. He himself, in his introduction, assures us that Pelé is 'remarkably expressive in his native Portuguese'. I was astonished to find a paragraph describing Brazil's psychologist in the 1958 World Cup following my own words in the *Sunday Times* World Cup History with mysterious accuracy; only to misunderstand entirely two of the psychologist's favourite theories on football. Pelé – or Mr Fish?

Yet if you can grit your teeth and swallow hard, the book has its rewards and revelations, even if it is negligible in any literary sense, coy and banal where Pelé's private life is concerned, unoriginal in its thoughts on the game, shallow in its personal judgments. Since he has been playing in New York, Pelé has worked hard at being Mr Nice Guy; he even insisted that one biographer remove a mildly derogatory reference he'd made to Papa Doc Duvalier; yet enough resentment has accumulated through the dazzling years to force its way through the bland public veneer.

What we meet, in effect, is once more The Athlete as Victim. We are even told, for the first time, why Pelé, at the age of 34, suddenly came out of retirement and left his beloved Brazil to play, for $4½m. in the third-rate North American Soccer League, for the New York Cosmos. Quite simply and sadly, he needed the money. For the second time in his extraordinary career, his affairs had been wretchedly mismanaged. A company called Fiolax, with which Pelé was involved (he held only 6 per cent of the shares but had guaranteed a huge loan), had fallen foul of the authorities, illegally importing raw material. Nobly, Pelé refused to let the company go bankrupt. The cost to him was over $2m., and it was this, rather than the much-trumpeted persistence of the Cosmos' English executive, Clive Toye (recently defenestrated), which brought him to New York.

In 1965, the rewards of seven years' incomparable football, a multitude of spectacular goals, went to the winds when an overweight Spaniard called Pepe Gordo, to whom he'd entrusted his affairs as a 19-year-old boy, told him there had been 'several small reversals'. In fact, he was wiped out, and saved himself only by signing a highly disadvantageous contract with Santos, the only first-class club he ever played for, the last year of which he was to give them free. His bitterness towards Santos, a club which grew fat on his endeavours, dragged him round the world for years to play in endless friendly matches, spent no money on their stadium, traduced him in the press when he asked for more, is manifest. If he did not play, in any game abroad, then Santos were $10,000 the poorer.

That Pelé should be helpless, should be so exploited, in the world of affairs seems at one with his initial image: the black prodigy, all eagerness, innocence and transcendent talent, who scored two marvellous goals in Stockholm in the World Cup Final of 1958, and would score another just as good in the Final of 1970. In the intervening years, he had been kicked and hacked and abused, not least in the World Cup of 1966, before complaisant English referees, but nothing could blunt the edge of his virtuosity nor wipe the smile of expectancy off his face. If he revels in his fame, his meeting with the Pope, with Presidents, with Chinese border guards who crossed into Hong Kong to get his autograph, if he has blatantly been used in the US to seduce middle-class whites rather than inspire inner-city blacks, he remains clearly uncorrupted. If there is reason to see him as The Athlete as Victim, there is none to see him as that other cliché, Ring Lardner's *Champion,* the athlete as public hero, private bastard.

Perhaps he has been a little less than frank about his attitude to ill-treatment. In the World Cup of 1970, against Italy, his direct opponent, Bertini, tried expertly to goad Pelé into retaliation – without success. He was equally restrained against the ruthless Bulgarian, Zetchev, in the 1966 World Cup Finals, but two years earlier, playing Argentina in Sao Paolo, he had finally lost patience with the villainies of Mesiano, butted him in the face, and broke his nose. By and large, Pelé's philosophy was to respond in kind.

Managers are sometimes excoriated, no one more vigorously than João Saldanha, a slender, volatile polyglot who managed the 1970 Brazil team until a few months before the World Cup Finals in Mexico. He had, one knew, clashed with Pelé and inevitably lost. Now Pelé tells us that Saldanha was punching his critics, whether fans or journalists, and spreading stories, first that Pelé was myopic, second that he had contracted

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some nameless and dreadful disease:

> He seemed so positive on the point that I became worried. Was it possible that while he had been coach, Saldanha had seen physical reports on me . . . Did I, in truth, have some terrible disease . . .?

He did not. The 1970 World Cup, after the disappointments, the injuries, of 1962 and 1966, was a triumph. Afterwards, he said that he would play in no more. Detractors muttered that he was angry because the Brazilian Sports Confederation called in a loan they'd made to him, which he regarded as a gift. Press and public abused him, in 1974, when Brazil were beaten; a clear case of belabouring the idol.

Meanwhile, he has helped the Cosmos to win the American Championship, before crowds which have exceeded 77,000, has set off with them on a tour of China which his presence has made possible, and is due to play his last game tomorrow, half for and half against Santos, in New Jersey. If it is his last game.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

DDT

The Plough and the Stars *Olivier*
Saki *Apollo*
A Murder is Announced *Vaudeville*

Those who see reviewing as a form of pest-control will certainly find nits to pick off Bill Bryden's production of *The Plough and the Stars,* and maybe some lurking on the body of the play itself. Aren't the first two acts pretty garrulous, even by Irish standards? Why is Susan Fleetwood constantly described as 'little, little red-lipped Nora' when her mouth is actually rather pale and her height such that your average Hollywood hero would have to stand on an orange-box in order to make erotic contact with it? Does Tony Doyle, playing her insurgent husband, really have a face 'in which is the desire for authority without the power to attain it', as O'Casey's often oppressively precise stage-directions insist he must? Or can we perhaps forgive him his omission, as we would presumably have forgiven the actor J. M. Barrie once asked to 'enter, giving the impression of a man who has a brother living in Greenock'? The clouds of critical DDT clear away, and very little is changed. In all important respects the play survives, as impressive as ever.

O'Casey dedicated it 'to the gay laugh of my mother at the gate of the grave', thus neatly bringing together those elements that have marked much of Irish drama: abundant humour in glum contexts, warmth of natural affection, the threat of death and darkness. Add the accusation that the Irish romanticise violence, and you have Synge's *Playboy of the Western World.* Sprinkle with sentimentality, and you get Behan's *Hostage.* But no one's diagnosis of the national temper has the scope and depth of *Juno and the Paycock* or *The Plough and the Stars.* James Agate, reviewing the latter, scarcely exaggerated when he described the effect as Shakespearian. Onstage, Nym, Bardolph, Pistol and Doll Tearsheet are boozing and bickering, swearing and boasting: offstage, great battles are being prepared and fought. The difference, perhaps, is that O'Casey did not regard Easter 1916 as a heroic Agincourt unluckily won by the wrong side. His heart is altogether with the skulkers and scavengers in their slum and not at all with the rousing words of General Pearse, projected through the windows of a local pub:

> Bloodshed is a cleansing and sanctifying thing . . . Ireland has not known the exhilaration of war for over a hundred years. When war comes, she must welcome it, as she would welcome the Angel of God.

O'Casey, only two years away from delivering the definitive denunciation of war in *The Silver Tassie,* takes Falstaff's view of the matter. Can honour set to a leg, or take away the grief of a wound? As his Juno reminded her crippled boy, 'you lost your best principle when you lost your arm'; and as Nora now puts it, speaking up for those left at home, 'there's no woman gives a son or a husband to be killed – and if they say it, they're lying, lying, against God, nature, and against themselves'. In Act Three she clings ignominiously to her Jack, while a fellow-rebel dies noisily and untidily nearby, begging for his help. In Act Four, having lost both him and her unborn child, she runs stark mad. It is all very grim and pointed, and it isn't finished yet. Bessie Burgess, personification of all that's tough, truculent and generous, is lured by Nora to the window, and promptly shot by one of the jittery tommies below. So much for sanctifying bloodshed and exhilarating war: one demented girl, and one plump corpse lying, like a beached porpoise, on the floorboards. No wonder the Irish rioted when the play was first staged, back in 1926.

And it still retains its power to arrest and move, even in a production which, I have to admit, lacks great distinction. The cast, led by Anna Manahan's rolling, swaggering Bessie and Cyril Cusack's spruce but insufficiently aggressive Fluther, is mostly good without being very good; and only one of its number touches excellence. Miss Fleetwood has long made a speciality of women in love and women in torment because of love, but rarely can her well-worn sleeve have been asked to wear a heart more nakedly upon it. It is not easy, these cynical and disbelieving days, to get away with cries of 'Jack, my sweetheart, my lover – stay with your own little red-lipped Nora' or post-deluvian screeches of 'give me my baby, give him to me, give me my husband'. Miss Fleetwood, leaping nervelessly into the emotional flames, makes the first plausible and the second almost intolerably painful, a broken bottle shoved into the audience's collective gut. She transforms *The Plough* into what it finally is, a tragedy, one of the barest fistful of 20th-century plays to merit the name.

Emlyn Williams's suave efforts at the Apollo leave the impression that H. H. Munro, though a passable story-teller, was a tinny, second-level sort of wit, always ready with a *mot* not quite *bon* enough. Still, better that than the astonishingly gauche Christie which has just cranked into the Vaudeville. Which relative of the international cad Dmitri Stanfordis has come to Chipping Cleghorn to pot the heir of multi-millionaire Randall Girdler? Well, I unmasked the villain speedily enough myself, because he/she seemed the most unlikely candidate, though, since the most likely is always the most unlikely with Christie, that might of course mean the most likely candidate. As if you could care less.

Rock Music

Mark Kidel

Play With Fire

The Rolling Stones: Love You Live (2 LPs)
WEA COC89101 £5.99

At their best, the Rolling Stones are an unbeatable live rock'n'roll band. Pioneers of the early Sixties British rhythm-and-blues boom, the Stones alone were able to create music that could stand up to the Southside Chicago originals, their mean aggressive pose serving the essential rawness of the medium well. Only part of 'Love You Live', their new double album, released this month, demonstrates their devastating potential. On most of the tracks recorded at concerts held in Paris last year, they seem to be mechanically pacing through a repertoire of favourites. In bold contrast, the side from the El Mocambo Club in Toronto features the Stones in spine-chilling form.

Live recordings may now benefit from advances in technology – there is no doubt that the 12 engineers and assistants on 'Love You Live' have done a marvellous job – but concerts, for all the adrenalin they generate, do not always go well: major gigs have grown into mammoth De Mille productions, with massive road crews, outrageously expensive stage sets and a touring schedule that would exhaust an Olympic athlete. The likelihood of an outstanding performance probably varies in inverse proportion to the number of factors affecting the show: there is so much that can go wrong, in spite of the technical cast of thousands, from a rushed sound check to a stage monitor breakdown during the set. Perfect back-up from the roadies and machinery only allows for the possibility of a good show; it does not guarantee it, because there remains one crucial element that cannot be controlled – the chemical togetherness of the band on any given occasion.

It is not surprising that there have been so few outstanding live albums: the Who's 'Live at Leeds', the Band's 'Rock of Ages' and, in spite of their inferior sound quality, a few bootlegs including Little Feat's 'Electric Lycanthrope' and the Stones' own 'Live Than You'll Ever Be', a masterpiece unofficially recorded shortly after the release o

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their classic album 'Let It Bleed'. On that particular occasion, the bootlegger had been lucky: he had picked the right night. But the Stones were not so fortunate in rolling out the thousands of pounds' worth of recording equipment for the string of Paris gigs featured on 'Love You Live'.

As when I saw them at Earls Court a few weeks earlier, they were playing without much conviction, making all the right noises, but in a hurried and uncommitted way. The Earls Court concerts left many people wondering whether the Stones had lost their special magic, that ability to flirt with the cliff's edge and grin at the abyss. Had Altamont and the Hells Angels' real as opposed to theatrical violence been a little too much, and had they reatreated from playing with fire? The familiar chilling quality so unique to the Rolling Stones is absent from most of the Paris material. They do take off at times, on *Hot Stuff*, *Fingerprint File* and *Symphony for the Devil* in particular, all of them numbers characterised by their complex cross-rhythms and syncopation. Momentarily held together by the intricacy of the beat, perhaps, they turn out a very tight and powerfully erotic sound that makes the other French tracks sound sadly limp.

The contrasting brilliance of the night at the small El Mocambo Club recorded several months later suggests that the Stones may be – like most other bands that prefer genuine contact with their audience to grand operatic effects – most comfortable in an intimate club setting. It could, of course, just have been a good night: Margaret Trudeau was panting in the audience and Keith Richard's drug fracas with the Mounties created the right setting for a vintage Stones performance. The band's original strength was drawn from their excellent (for white boys) interpretations of Chicago blues. At the El Mocambo, they returned to their roots with songs first recorded by Muddy Waters, Bo Diddley, Chuck Berry and Howling Wolf, playing them with unreserved exuberance and self-confidence. The Stones have always been on dangerous territory – acting aggressive and tough, as if to compensate for their lack of genuine first-hand blues roots: R&B, the music of Chicago's nightmarish Southside ghetto, has always been steeped in violence – guns, knives, icepicks, and Mayor Daley's electric cattle-prods. For all their angry pouting, the Stones come from another world, but judging by the tracks recorded in Toronto, they must have soaked up a good dose of the blues.

Weekend Competition

No 2483 **Set by Little Keith**

The Editor is away this week, so let's slip in a really feelthy one. Do you know about those two peurile rogues, Nick and Shun ('For Nick, eh, Shun?' says Nick, eyeing a passing beauty)? Well, they spend most of their time thinking up improbable ways of saying a certain dirty word. 'So we've been sold as slaves in Tunis, Nick'; 'Yes – remember to call your master "Bey", Shun.' 'Whose cat is that, Nick?'; 'Why, that's ma's tabby, Shun.' 'This new barracks is coming along very nicely, Nick, but where will the soldiers eat?'; 'I believe *that's* the mess-to-be, Shun.' More, please, by 14 October.

Result of No 2480 **Set by E. O. Parrott**

The common cormorant, or shag, lays eggs inside a paper bag. Etcetera.

Report **by Jack Degree**

All right. A great giraffe, certainly – possibly a very great one: but did so many of you have to write about Victor's tragic end? I contemptuously print one sample. Dogs and dodos also featured prominently, but only a single competitor (the astute Joyce Johnson) seized on the obvious sitting duck: the Parrott! Disgusting in its ways, with those unspeakable eating habits and that quite appalling mode of reproduction . . . you'd think it would be a natural. Oh well. £6 apiece.

'Go to the ant, thou sluggard;
Consider her ways, and be wise.'
Well, I've been to the ant, and I'm buggered
If I think it's one up on us guys;
All that rushing about is damn silly,
(And uneconomic, I bet).
I'd rather consider the lily,
It's got Solomon beat – and *no* sweat.

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

The kangaroo's a tidy creature
Because she has a special feature –
I mean the pouch attached in front
To house the new-born kangarunt;
In this she always puts her trash
Like beer-cans, nutshells, cigar ash.
That's why the young when dropped on top
So very quickly learn to hop.

PETER ALEXANDER

A young giraffe, when bent on sex,
May find that there are certain checks
When aiming for his partner's bum
And lose his equilibrium;
Not even the keen fire brigade
Can get the creature quite unsplayed.
It really should be better-known
That copulation's safer prone.

M. K. CHEESEMAN

The lowest of the low, the squid,
Will show you his tentacles for a quid,
And if you let him have a fiver
He'll go all the way with a deep-sea diver.
But he does have one tenacious enemy,
The deeply puritanical sea anemone.
He daren't coral-walk since she last attacked,
And clubbed him senseless with a
biblical tract.

MORAY MCGOWAN

The E-O Parrott weekly romps
Through all the literary comps;
His pile of prizes is so large
That he can own a private barge.
In hopes of blinding readers' eyes
With dust, he goes in for disguise;
But we have found it never hard
To see through Maud and Everard.

JOYCE JOHNSON

Tony Miles

Chess

No 53 **The Dutch Defence**

The vast preponderance of modern chess literature is devoted to the openings. In consequence there is a tendency for players at all levels to play the early moves of a game quickly and with little thought, trusting the accuracy of their theoretical manuals. However, much of what is found in these works is dictated by the current fashion at the higher levels of the game, regardless of other considerations.

One such instance, which I wish to discuss this week, occurs in the Dutch Defence, particularly the Leningrad Variation (3 . . . P-KN3). The 'fashionable' player of the white pieces invariably combats this line with an early P-KN3 himself, 'because all the best players do'. But why? Is there not a case for considering 1 . . . P-KB4 to be simply a bad move, weakening the K-side and contributing nothing to development? Why then treat it with such respect?

Actually these thoughts first occurred to me in the last round at Hastings, when my opponent, the Norwegian IM Zwaig, opened 1. P-KN3, N-KB3; 2. P-KB4. At the time I was a tiny bit fed up with the tournament and felt like venting my wrath on someone and, there being no other candidates, Mr Zwaig got the job. So, not 2 . . . P-KN3 but 2 . . . P-Q4; 3. B-N2, N-B3 (intending P-K4); 4. N-KB3, B-N5; 5. P-Q4 (to prevent B x N and P-K4), Q-Q2 (preparing to exchange white-squared Bs which white hastens to prevent); 6. P-KR3, B x N; 7. P x B (better is B x B), P-K3; 8. B-K3, B-Q3; 9. P-KR4, N-K2; 10. N-B3? N-B4; 11. B-B2, B-N5! and after the inevitable B x N (if 12. Q-Q3, Q-B3) white, with his 2 impotent bishops was positionally lost. I continued with P-KR4, 0-0-0, transferred the Ns to QB5 and Q3, played P-KB4 blocking the K-side permanently, and won easily.

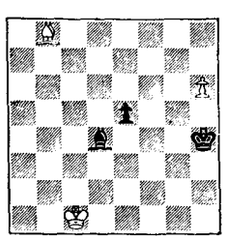
So why not play like this against the Dutch, I thought. So I did, and soon I had some converts.

Some examples:

Miles v. Wockenfuss (the current W. German champion)—Bad Lauterberg '77. 1. P-QB4, P-KB4; 2. P-Q4, N-KB3; 3. N-QB3, P-KN3; 4. B-N5, B-N2; 5. Q-Q2, P-KR3; 6. B x N, P x B; 7. P-K3, N-B3; 8. P-Q5, N-K4; 9. P-B4, N-B2; 10. B-Q3, P-KR4; 11. N-B3, P-Q3; 12. N-KR4, R-R3; 13. 0-0-0, B-Q2; 14. KR-K1, K-B1 at which point black's position was so ridiculous that I found it impossible to take the game seriously.

J. Hartston v. Van der Giessen—Wijk-aan-Zee '77. 1. P-Q4, P1KB4; 2. N-KB3, N-KB3; 3. P-QB4, P-KN3; 4. N-B3, B-N2; 5. B-N5, P-Q3; 6. Q-Q2, P-KR3; 7. B x N, P x B; 8. P-Q5, N-Q2; 9. P-K3, N-K4; 10. N-Q4, Q-K2; 11. 0-0-0, P-QR3; 12. P-B4, N-B2; 13. B-Q3, B-Q2; 14. KR-K1, 0-0; 15. P-K4, P x P; 16. R x P, Q-Q1; 17. N-K6, B x N; 18. P x B Resigns.

Both the above games illustrate the theme of 'killing' the black bishops.



Problem 53

A little help this week. It's white to play and win (there is one!). Answers to me at the NS post-marked not later than 12 October.

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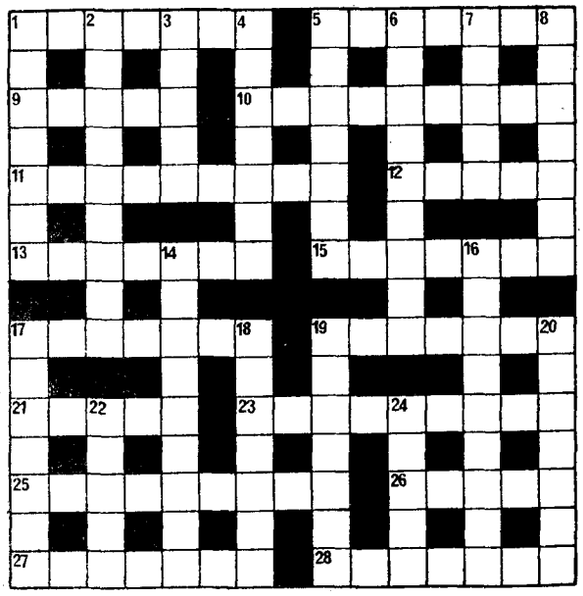
Weekend Crossword 1235

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1235, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 11 October.



ACROSS

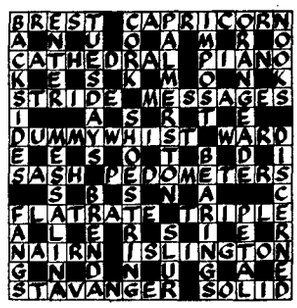
1. 'The earth hath ——, as the water has' (*Macbeth*) (7).
5. Handkerchief made of strip and two articles (7).
9. The less frequently seen in paper are read (5).
10. The same motor may be used by people who live together (9).
11. Made up one's mind about thanks being returned after devotion (9).
12. Shaver in with a spare razor (5).
13. Mutilates a point of view in writing (7).
15. Falls give back a reward to the artist (7).
17. Looking mainly to strive for superiority and get a victory (7).
19. Birds when small go back in holes (7).
21. Anna's part of it (5).
23. Game only goes about it with a tune (9).
25. Fruit even without Jack (9).
26. Principals are not included in this party (5).
27. Revised start in passing through (7).
28. Slim one who gets rid of about fifty (7).

DOWN

1. Sound without colour produces tedium (7).
2. Social occasion in which one is badly canned under the counter (9).
3. Song sung in a lovely rich melody (5).
4. Logical technique discovers gold in places (7).
5. Extend to a brother a place of retreat (7).
6. Put me into sleep after time, for it shows who occupies the room (9).
7. 'Condemn the fault and not the —— of it' (*M. for M.*) (5).
8. Ray is as altered as the old place (7).
14. They go slowly but may make the loser tire (9).
16. Possibly I did face one when turned sour (9).
17. First name of a student of Bede (7).
18. 'Leave and make merry' the town says (7).
19. Fences which give one signs of fright (7).
20. Prodigal poet (7).
22. The girl to thwart her father (5).
24. Bird man in small part (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1233



Prizewinners to No 1233

Micheline Aissa (London SW10)
V. T. Jakeways (Smethwick)
J. Hopkinson (London WC1)

APPOINTMENTS

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Further information and application forms available from: **The Secretary, North Wales Arts Association, 10 Wellfield House, Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 1ER. Telephone: Bangor 53248.**

Closing date for receiving applications: Monday, 31 October, 1977.

CAMPAIGN ASSISTANT

The Secretary of the Good Neighbour Campaign – a partnership sponsored by the DHSS between Central and Local Government, Trade Unions, professional associations, community groups, and voluntary organisations – needs a lively, personable assistant to help run the Secretariat's work from its small office in Central London.

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Please write to Roger Barnard, Good Neighbour Campaign, Brook House, 2 Torrington Place, London WC1, specifying your age, working experience, phone number and reasons for wanting the job, or phone 01-323 4757 if you would like further details and an informal talk. Closing date for applications, 14 October.

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THE POLYTECHNIC OF NORTH LONDON

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY & PHILOSOPHY

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for the period 1 October 1977 to 31 March 1978

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INFORMATION OFFICER

CEH is a small advisory agency which assists housing and social services departments, health and education authorities, architects and others to understand and design for the needs of handicapped people. We are looking for someone to manage our information service, including library and publications and edit our journal 'Design For Special Needs'.

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Vol. 94 No. 2428

Contents

430 **James Fenton:** Cyril's Cry for Help

431 **Mervyn Jones:** Beside the Seaside

432 **K. R. Sundar Rajan:** Janata's 200 Days

433 **Christopher Hitchens:** The New American Left

434 **Santiago Carrillo:** Euro-communism & Social Democracy

438 **Peter Taylor:** The Men on the Blanket

439 **Roger Woddis:** Song of Praise

440 **Profile of François Mitterrand**

442 **Crucifer:** London Diary

443 **Yvonne Roberts:** Luck of the Irish

444 **Arthur Marshall:** Take a Pew

445 **Letters to the Editor**

Books and Arts

447 **James Fenton:** Edward Lear

448 **Russell Davies:** New Poetry

Other reviews by Paul Johnson, Victoria Glendinning, Julian Barnes, Corinna Adam, Philip French, Tom Paulin

453 **John Coleman:** Films

453 **Eric Korn:** Radio

454 **Martin Amis:** Television

455 **Brian Glanville:** Football

456 **Benedict Nightingale:** Theatre

456 **Mark Kidel:** Rock Music

457 **Weekend Competition**

457 **Chess**

458 **Crossword**

Theatres

ALDWYCH THEATRE (Royal Shakespeare Company) 836 6404. Recorded booking info: 836 5332. 'Romeo and Juliet', Ibsen's 'Pillars of the Community', 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', 'Troilus and Cressida' in repertoire. See daily press for dates and times. RSC also at **'The Warehouse'** at Donmar Theatre. Week of 3 Oct: Brecht's 'Schweyk', C. P. Taylor's 'Bandits' (not suitable for children), 'Macbeth' (sold out). And at Piccadilly Theatre in 'Wild Oats' and Savoy Theatre in 'Man and Superman'.

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE. 722 9301. 'The Dog Ran Away' by Brother Jonathan OSF. Directed by Michael Rudman. Prevs till Sun. 2 Oct. 8 p.m. Opens 3 Oct. 7 p.m. Subs evgs 8 p.m.

NATIONAL THEATRE. 928 2252. 'Open Stage', 'The Plough & the Stars', 'Volpone', 'Bedroom Farce' and 'State of Revolution', 'Sir is Winning', 'The Passion' and the illustrated lecture at the Cottesloe 'The Period Costume or Modern Dress'. See daily press for dates & times or ring recorded info: 928 2256.

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J. S. BACH harpsichord recital by Naomi Davidov, Purcell Room (RFH), Wed. 5 Oct. 7.30. Tickets from RFH, 928 3191, £1.50, £1.25, £1.00, 75p. Programme includes Italian Concerto, Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue, French Suite No 5, Preludes & Fugues from Book II.

Exhibition

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Meetings

YOU ARE INVITED to attend a Labour Middle East Council Open Meeting on the Middle East which will be addressed by H.E. The Algerian Ambassador. 6.30 p.m., Tuesday 4 October in the Nelson Room, Old Ship Hotel, Brighton.

YOUNG FABIAN SEMINAR: The Direction of Health Policy. Chair: Dr Donald Gould. Speakers: The Rt Hon David Ennals MP, Dr P. Draper, Peter Jacques TUC. Sat. 8 Oct. 10.30-4.00. Tickets 50p. 11 Dartmouth St, London SW1. 01-930 3077.

PRIVATE TENANTS & Long Leaseholders. Sixth Conference of Private Residents Associations on Saturday 5 November at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1. Details from Secretary, 15 Cecil Mansions, London SW17 7QN. Vital policy lobby to be launched.

CAPTAIN SWING RIOTS. Guest speaker Michael Foot MP. Sat. 1 Oct. Plaw Hatch Hall, Nr East Grinstead, Sussex at 7.30 p.m. Adm. £1. (East Grinstead CLP).

WHAT FUTURE FOR WORK? Day Conference featuring: James Robertson ('Profit or People?' & 'Power, Money & Sex'), Canon Peter Challen (Director, South London ecumenical team of Industrial Chaplains, & Sloan Fellow of the London Business School), and Ms Sheila Rothwell (Assistant Chief Executive of the Equal Opportunities Commission). 'Questions about the future of work are among the key questions we now face: about employment and unemployment . . . about paid and unpaid work . . . about socially useful work and socially harmful work' . . . Saturday 8 October, 10 a.m. to 5.15 p.m., at the Maria Assumpta College of Education, 23 Kensington Square, London W8. Presented *by the Teilhard Centre for the Future of* Man, 81 Cromwell Road, London SW1 (01-370 6660). Contact the Conference Organiser at this address for more details.

SIR KEITH JOSEPH speaks 8 p.m. Mon. 3 October, Hampstead Town Hall.

BARBARA LANTIN of IPC Magazines will speak on 'Women and The Media' at Young Mapam, 37 Broadhurst Gardens, NW6, 8 p.m. Sun. 2 October.

ADLERIAN SOCIETY. 'Adlerian Psychotherapy' Paul Rom, L-ès-L, DES. Tues. 4 Oct. 7.30 p.m. Mary Sumner Hall, 24 Tufton St, SW1. Visitors welcome 50p *(students 25p).*

LABOUR CAMPAIGN FOR GAY RIGHTS meeting, 4 October, Union Hall, Central Free Church, Air Street, Brighton, 5.15 p.m. Disco, 5 October, Queens Hotel, Kings Road (Markwells Bar), Brighton, 9 p.m.-1 a.m. Tickets £1 (food and raffle). 37 Eastbourne Ave, London W3 6JR.

'THE FIGHT AGAINST Religious Education', talk by Harry Stopes-Roe, London Young Humanists, 13 Prince of Wales Terr., W8. Sun. 2 Oct. 7.30 p.m. Adm. 30p.

LIVING YOGA. New series talks on Yoga mind-training every Thursday 7 p.m. at YWCA, 16 Great Russell St. WC1 begins 29 Sept. Admission free. Details from Shanti Sadan, 29 Chepstow Villas, W11.

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BUDDHIST SOCIETY, 58 Eccleston Square, London SW1. Sat. 1 Oct. 3 p.m. 'Open Day'. Tues. 4 Oct. 6.30 p.m. 'Introducing Buddhism'. Wed. 5 Oct. 6.30 p.m. Public Lecture—'Ethical Training as a Prerequisite for Mind Training' — Ven. Piyatissa. All welc. Send s.a.e. for full prog.

THEOSOPHY. Simple talks for inquirers: Sun. 2 Oct. 8 p.m. 'Theosophy: Wisdom of the Ages'. S.a.e. free pamphlet, book list. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

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